# HISTORY of JAMESTOWN RHODE ISLAND

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# HISTORY

of

# JAMESTOWN

on

# CONANICUT ISLAND

in the

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

by W. L. WATSON Copyright 1949 by W. L. WATSON

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To Mother

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#### Preface

In presenting this History of Jamestown, I do so with a full realization that no history is ever finished. But Jamestown, so rich in the historical events of our country, so typical of the lives of our forefathers, so full of human interest, certainly should have its historical events preserved while material and memories still are available.

The chapter on "Old Houses" was not included in the early consideration of the book. But as the writing progressed it became increasingly evident that they also were historical and should be mentioned. Houses that I know of, some standing, others only a memory, have been omitted only because of lack of material. So let it be that this chapter is but a challenge to someone else to search the old records, read old deeds and wills, dig deeper into old trunks and boxes in the attics and gather material for a book, "Old Houses of Jamestown".

I particularly wish to acknowledge my great indebtedness to Miss Lena Clarke and her sisters Clara and Jennie who spent many laborious hours in copying the old records, all of which was most graciously made available to me. I am indebted to the Rhode Island Historical Society for the loan of many of the cuts of old prints and buildings and to Mr. William G. Roelker, the Director, for his cooperation and assistance. I am also indebted to the Harvard University Press for permission to use transcripts from the Diary of Frederick Mackenzie relating to Jamestown.

I also wish to express my thanks and deep appreciation to the many others who have so kindly given of their time and assistance.

WALTER LEON WATSON



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# History of Jamestown on Conanicut Island in the State of Rhode Island

HE Town of Jamestown is on the Island of Conanicut. The island is nine miles long and an average of one mile wide, having an area of 9½ square miles. It is at the entrance to Narragansett Bay and separates it into the East and West passage. The northern end of the island is surrounded by the peaceful waters of the bay, while the southern end protrudes into the more turbulent waters of the Atlantic Ocean. Standing on the highest spot of the island, just west of the junction of Carr's Lane and the Old Road, you have a full view of the waters surrounding the island and the land beyond. It is a scene of peaceful beauty. You see pleasure boats, large and small, dotting the water, sailboats and yachts scudding before the breeze, freighters coming into port or heading out to sea and vessels of the North Atlantic Squadron riding at their moorings. You accept it for what it is—one of the most beautiful bays in all the world.

But not so with your friend the geologist, standing next to you. He may gaze on the same scene of beauty but recalls his work on the U. S. Geodetic Survey and their report "The Geology of the Narragansett Basin". In his mental vision, his mind's eye, as it were, he sees a panorama which begins 50 to 100 million years ago, when the earth's surface was hardening. Terrific pressures from within would force the surface of the earth up in places causing a folding or sinking in other places, and if it sank low enough waters of the ocean would overflow the sunken area. Sediment gathered from the shores and inflowing waters would gradually sink to the bottom and, in a few thousand years or so, form strata of rock. These periods of upheaval followed by ages of quiet were repeated time and time again, forming strata upon strata of rock. And so today the geologist, by scientific analysis of the various rock strata, can tell what period, the Azoic, Proterozoic, Palaeozoic, Mesozoic, Cainozoic (covering a period of from 40 to 800 million years ago) the particular rock stratum was formed and approximately what the surface of earth at that particular place was like at that time.

Knowing all that in infinitely greater detail, our geologist would see that at one time what is now Conanicut was an island about 4 miles wide (east to west) extending from the west shore of Mackerel Cove to Newport Neck and north to include all the islands of the lower bay. At another time he would see Block Island connected with the mainland on the east and west and Narragansett Bay a fresh water lake extending from Providence to

Block Island. With every upheaval came many changes in the earth's surface, but Narragansett Bay remained a fresh water lake for many thousands of years.

In the latter part of the last geological period, the Cainozoic, came the glaciers or Ice Age. Great masses of ice crept down from the north, an inch or so a year, until the entire northern part of the globe was covered; in the east, down to Japan, in Russia to the Steppes, England to the River Thames and in Connecticut and Rhode Island to about our present coast line. In a period of 500,000 years four of these glaciers came crunching down from the north. The last of these ground away the rock strata that connected Block Island to the main land and Narragansett Bay, which for thousands of years had been a fresh water lake, was opened to the Atlantic Ocean and became a salt water bay. As the glacier gradually melted it deposited the rocks, stones and earth that it had gathered up and Conanicut emerged about as it is today. While this glacier occurred some 50,000 years ago, some geologists say that we are still in it's declining years. H. G. Wells, in his "Outline of History" says "Half a million years hence this may be a much sunnier and pleasanter world to live in than it is today."

As the glacier gradually receded and disappeared under the influence of the increasing temperate climate, vegetation started and in the course of time, the island was covered with a virgin forest.

For many thousands of years there was no human life on this continent. It probably was during the interglacial period between the third and last glaciers that parts of the tribes of central Asia, wandering far in the constant search of food, crossed over the strip of land which then connected Siberia with Alaska. Then the last glacier, slowly but surely descended from the north and drove them before it to the south. The last glacier occurred 35 to 50 thousand years ago. In those intervening years these barbaric groups developed into the American Indian. They developed no particular agriculture, lived almost entirely by hunting, roamed the country in small groups and never established a settlement of permanent homes. They left no hieroglyphic writings, evidently had no contact with any other civilization, and their development is very obscure. Yet, when the white man came to these shores, he found the Narragansett Indians a coherent tribe of some 20,000 members with definite places of habitation. In summer they would be in the open places, of which Jamestown was one, where they could raise their crops of corn and beans, and in winter they sought the protection of the forest. They had a system of money called Wampum. There were two kinds, being small discs about an inch in diameter, the white, called peag, made from periwinkle shells and the blue from the blue or purplish spot in the shell of the quahaug. The white shell became worth six to an English penny and the blue 3 to the penny. They also had developed a form of speech which was peculiar to itself, having nothing in common with the development of any other language except, possibly, the Chinese. Roger Williams wrote a dictionary or, as he called it, "A Key into the Language of America".

So the first white man found America inhabited by a dark skinned race with a culture several thousand years behind that of the white races of Europe.

There is considerable doubt as to who was the first white man to see or set foot on Conanicut. Extensive research and excavations are now being made at the Old Stone Mill at Newport to determine, if possible, its origin. Was it built about the year 1000 by the Norsemen or did Governor Arnold build it in 1670? There is no answer as yet.

The first written evidence is in a letter generally accepted as having been written by Giovanni Verrazano to Francis I, King of France, dated July 8, 1524. Following is his description of what is generally considered to be Narragansett Bay:

"We proceeded to another place — where we found an excellent harbor. Before entering it, we saw about twenty small boats full of people, who came about our ship, uttering many cries of astonishment, but they would not approach nearer than fifty paces—. We often went five or six leagues into the interior and found the country as pleasant as is possible to conceive, adapted to cultivation of every kind, whether of corn wine or oil; there are open plains twenty-five or thirty leagues in extent, entirely free from trees or other hindrances, and of so great fertility that whatever is sown there will yield an excellent crop. On entering the woods, we observed that they might be traversed by an army ever so numerous; the trees of which they were composed were oaks, cypresses, and others unknown to Europe. We found also apples, plums, filberts, and many other fruits; but all of a different kind from ours. The animals, which are in great numbers as stags, deer, lynxes, and many other species, are taken by snares, and by bows, the latter being their chief instrument; their arrows are wrought with great beauty, and for the heads of them they use emery, jasper, hard marble, and other hard stone, in the place of iron. They also use the same kind of sharp stones in cutting down trees, and with them they construct their boats of single logs, hollowed out with admirable skill, and sufficiently commodious to contain ten or twelve persons;—. This region is situated in the parrallel of Rome being 41° 40' of north latitude.

It looks towards the south, on which side the harbor is half a league broad; afterwards upon entering it, the extent between the coast and north is twelve leagues, and then enlarging itself it forms a very large bay twenty leagues in circumference, in which are five small islands, of great fertility and beauty, covered with large and lofty trees. Among these islands any fleet, however large, might ride safely. Turning towards the south, at the entrance of the harbor, on both sides, there are very pleasant hills, and many streams of clear water, which flow down to the sea. In the midst of the entrance, there is a rock of freestone, formed by nature, and suitable for the construction of any kind of machine or bulwark for the defense of the harbor."

However there are those who believe this letter was actually written by Estevan Gomez, a Portuguese corsair, and Mr. Buckingham Smith in 1864, read a paper before the New York Historical Society setting forth that the letter in no part can have any possible reference to Narragansett Bay. Truly the dim past is still shrouded in mystery and uncertainty.

The Indians came from those nomadic tribes of central Asia whose wanderings in the constant search of food finally brought them to America. Their urge was the sustenance of life—nothing more. Then about the year 1000 came the Norsemen, whose urge was the spirit of adventure and explora-

tion. In 1492 came Columbus, whose urge was the firm conviction that he could reach fabulous India by sailing west and he, in turn, opened the way for such adventurers as Cortez and Pizarro, whose urge was the lust for gold and conquest. But all through Europe in the 15th and 16th centuries there was developing an urge that was not to be denied—the urge for freedom of thought and action. This development of conscience and consuming desire for freedom in political and particularly in religious matters was changing the political and religious structures of Europe. As this was the urge that finally forced the Pilgrims to leave their native land it would seem that the actual history of Jamestown, or almost any old New England town, began in the 14th and 15th centuries, in those widely separated movements which, with the great aid of the invention of printing, led to the Reformation of the 16th century.

While the Reformation was essentially a religious and moral movement, of necessity it developed in the individual the feeling of responsibility and independence of thought. The courage and determination of the Pilgrims to leave home and friends and seek a new life in an unknown country was not born over night. It was, instead, the culmination of many years of struggle, privation and persecution, but always with an ever increasing elevation of the soul, clarification of the mind and the development of conscience.

From the beginning of the Reformation, about 1515, down to 1607, when that little band at Scrooby, exiled by the English government, crossed to Holland and settled in Leyden, this idea of freedom in religious thought had spread in all the governments of the old world. But the little colony in Leyden became convinced they could never attain their ideals amid the surroundings of Europe, and we have that epoch-making voyage of the Mayflower in 1620. The reasons for this voyage, and the strength of character it took to make it, should be the first consideration in any history of early New England.

The first voyage having been successfully made, others soon followed and by 1644, thirty-four thousand people had settled in New England. The Bay Colony, developed more along commercial lines, soon attained the greater prominence. The government was started as a democracy, the governor and his assistants being chosen by the freemen. But in 1631, it was decreed that none but members of the church could be freemen. The government thus became a pure theocracy, controlled, unfortunately, by a few narrow minded, superstitious, religious bigots. Into these surroundings came Roger Williams in 1631. He was soon (1635) banished from the colony because of his religious views. Mrs. Ann Hutchinson also preached a gospel that offended the church government. She, too, was banished "out of our jurisdiction as a woman not fit for our society." Before and during her trial many of her followers and others in sympathy with her, had been warned to leave the colony or they would be summoned before the court "to answer such things as shall be objected." Realizing what all this was going to mean to those not in full sympathy with the theocratic government, Dr. John Clarke, William Coddington and their many sympathetic friends decided to form a colony of their own and chartered a sailing vessel to take them to the shores of Long Island or possibly Delaware Bay.

While the vessel was rounding Cape Cod a few of them went overland to Providence to confer with Roger Williams. Being in full sympathy with them and desiring such people as neighbors, he suggested they purchase the Island of Acquidneck from the Indians. (It will be recalled that one of the many points of disagreement between Williams and the Boston authorities was his contention that the king had no right to the land in America, as it belonged to the Indians.) His suggestion met with the approval of the company and after several meetings with the Indian Chiefs Connonicus and Miantanomu, who were very friendly with Roger Williams, a compact of government was drawn up on the 7th day of the first month (March), 1637, and on the 24th day of the same month the deed was drawn up at Roger Williams' trading post at Cocumscussoc and signed by Canonicus and Miantanomu, Chief Sachems of the Narragansett Indians, whereby title to "the great island of Acquidneck lyinge from hence Eastward in this Bay, as also the marsh or grasse upon Quinunicutt and the rest of the islands in the Bay (excepting Prudence)", passed from the Narragansett Indians to "Mr. Coddington and his friends under him." Here we have the first mention of Conanicut in any official record.

The settlement was established at Pocasset (now Portsmouth), and in the first year it has been estimated that over one hundred families joined the new colony, among whom were Ann Hutchinson, who had been banished from the Bay Colony at Boston, and many of her followers. Considerable dissension soon arose between the Hutchinson group and Dr. John Clarke, William Coddington and their followers, on both political and religious matters and on the 28th of the 2d month (April) 1639, the more substantial members, under the leadership of Dr. John Clarke and William Coddington, moved to the southern part of the island and established themselves at what is now Newport.

In the records of the first town meeting at Newport we find the following entry:

"It is agreed and ordered, that the Plantation now begun at this Southwest end of the island, shall be called Newport: and that all the landes lying Northward and Eastward from the said Towne towards Pocasset, for the space of five miles, so across from sea to sea with all ye landes Southward and Westward, bounded with the main sea, together with the small Islands and the grass of Cunnunnegott, is appointed for the accommodation of ye said Towne."

Here we have the second mention of Conanicut, but this time with a special reference which has a major bearing on the history of the island.

(It should be noted that in the purchase of the Island of Acquidneck the deed gave the right only to the "marsh or grasse on Quinunicutt" — the island itself still belonged to the Indians.)

In picturing conditions with which the settlers of practically every town in New England had to contend, it must be remembered that all the country

was a virgin forest. It was even so at Newport. But for many years the Narragansett Indians had used Conanicut for a summer camping ground and here, after first having cleared the ground, they raised their crops of corn and beans. Their method of clearing was to set fire to the forest when conditions were favorable and let it burn. As a result large areas were cleared and had grown up to "grasse." This was a most valuable crop for settlers at Newport who, as yet, had very limited pasture for their cattle. Hence the "grasse of Cunnunnegott" was especially set apart "for the acommodation of ye said Towne."

But trouble arose over this same "grasse" and in the Land Evidence Book, No. 1, page 6 we find the following entry dated March 10, 1656.

"For as much as it is frequently declared that of late there have been endeavors used by some who are neither inhabitants of this Island or members of this Colony, to get into their possession and power of disposal the above Island Quononaqutt. And considering how commodiously ye said Island lieth for the enlarging the acomodations of some of us, in regard to ye nearness of it to our dwellings as also considering the great straight that many of us are in, for want of commonage for cattle, Therefore and for the preventing any forreigners getting into their possession whereby inconvenience and disturbance might possibly, yea and probably arise to ye government of this Colony.

"We whose names are hereto subscribed do as above said for ourselves or heirs etc. agree as followeth: Viz.

"First, That for the procuring the aforesaid Island Quononaqutt for ye occasions aforesaid we do hereby authorize and appoint seven of our number (namely) William Coddington Esq. Benedict Arnold, Sen. William Brenton or in his absence William Baulston in his stead, also Richard Smith of Narragansett, also Capt. John Cranston, Caleb Carr and John Sanford to use the best of their endeavors to make a full and firm purchase of the aforesaid Island Quononaqutt for and to themselves & for the rest of us who are in this present writing hereafter in order mentioned and also here unto to subscribe, and to the end premised the persons aforenamed are hereby fully and absolutely impowered and authorized, . . . . to meet . . . . and agree upon any direction . . . . about getting the assurance from any Sachem and of the Indians . . concerning said Island Quononaqutt, as also for the Island called Dutch Island to the intent Above said."

Richard Smith Junr. negotiated with the Indian sachems and a price of £100, to be paid in wampum and peag, was agreed upon. The sachems, with their braves, and the purchasers assembled at the house of William Coddington in Newport where the deed was signed and witnessed, after which it was ratified by the passing of turf and twig from other sachems to Caleb Carr and Francis Brinley.

#### Newport on Rhode Island in ye Narragansett Bay in New England April 17, 1657.

Know all men by these presents that I Cashanaquont (Indian) and a Chief Sachem and Commander of the Indians of Narragansett Bay and Quononaqutt Island in Narragansett Bay aforesaid etc. For and in consideration of several gifts of value before hand received, and also for and in consideration of ye full and just sum of one hundred pounds Sterling in hand also received in name and nature or a fine or purchase money I say that I ye aforenamed Sachem, for the aforesaid con-

siderations have and by these presents do fully bargain for, make over, and make lawful sale of all and every part and parcel of the aforenamed Island Quononaqutt Together with all ye appurtenances, benefits, profits, commodities and privileges thereof, thereupon and thereunto properly belonging or appertaining unto William Coddington Esq. & Benedict Arnold (Senior) both of Newport on Rhode Island in ye aforesaid Bay of Narragansett, for themselves and such other of ye free inhabitants of Rhode Island aforesaid and other their friends as are in covenent with them (the said William Coddington Esq. and Benedict Arnold Senr) by writings about ye premises, which writing beareth date March the 10th 1656/57.) And furthermore ye aforesaid Island of Quononaqutt is hereby avouched and declared by me ye forenamed Sachem that it is the proper right and inheritance of ye persons before premised themselves, their heirs, executors, administrators and assigns for all and every and either of them, to hold use possess and enjoy quietly with out any lawful let or hindrance as their and every and either of their true rightful and lawful inheritance forever according to each his proportion as mentioned in ye premised covenants written between themselves as aforesaid. And furthermore I the aforenamed Sachem Cashanaquont do hereby own myself obliged to clear and satisfy all ye other Sachems or others pretending, or that shall or may here after pretend or lay claim and interest in the premises to the disturbance of the premised purchases. And more over I hereby engage, that upon my own proper charge to satisfy them and every of them so claiming, and also in time convenient as shall be required by ye aforenamed purchasers I do engage upon my own proper charges to remove all ye Indian inhabitants, and clear them off from ye aforesaid Island Quononaqutt, and cause them to leave free and full possession of the said Island wholly to ye said purchasers, without putting ye said purchasers to any further charges, either for the Indian Corn Fields or any other labours of theirs that is to remain on said Island at their departure from off the said Island: and in witness of this my free and considerate bargain and sale I the above named Cashanaquont do set my hand this 17th of April 1657 as first above is mentioned ye date of these presents.

Signed and Delivered Cashanaquont his mark

In presence of Fran Brinley Hugh Bewit Matackes his mark

(Alias) Newcome

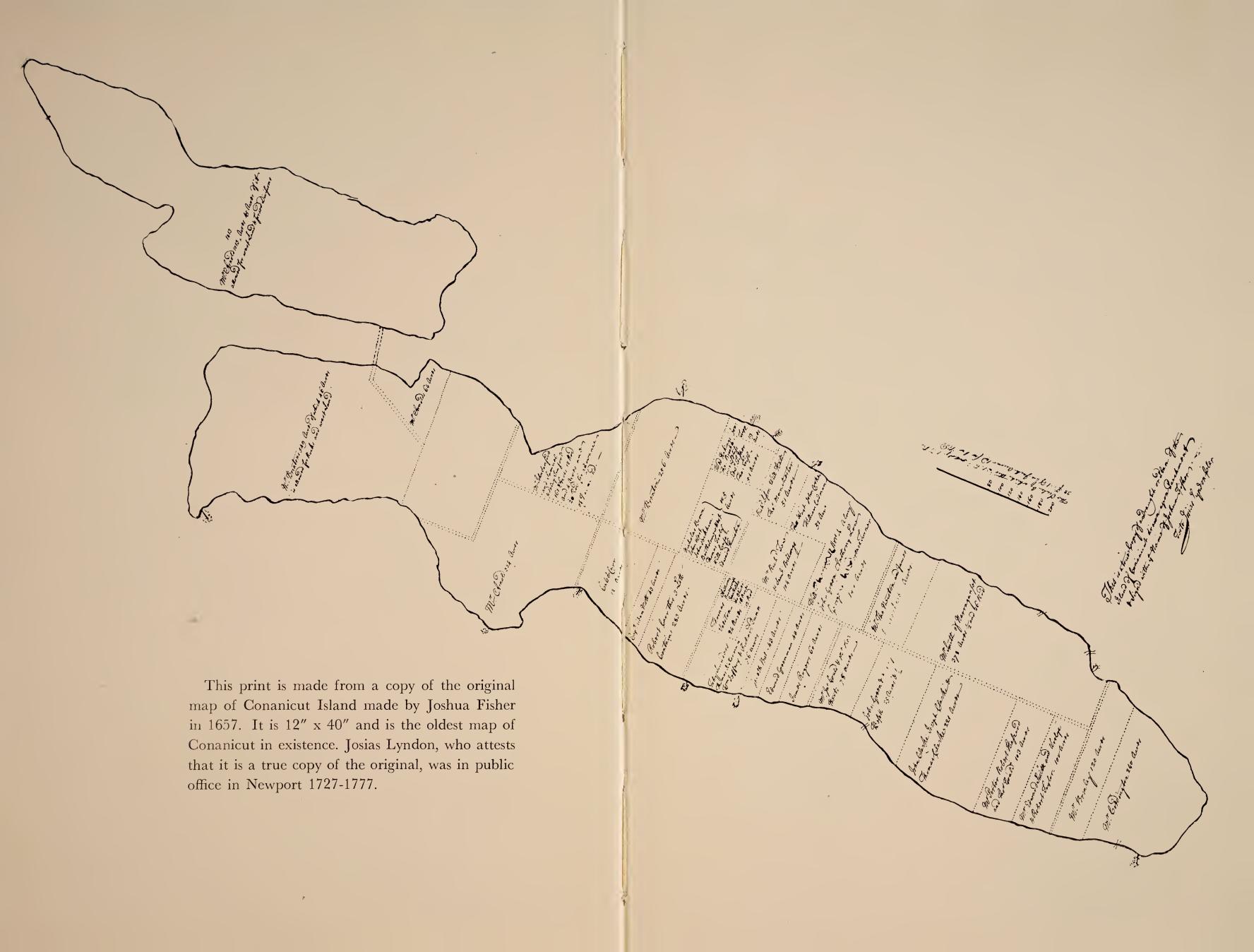
This deed of sale above written was entered upon record ye 25th of January 1680

Jno Fones Clerk

The complete agreement covers many pages and is made up of 12 articles defined as follows;

- 1. Quoted above
- 2. Proportion of island allotted to each purchaser.
- 3. Appoints perpetual council of 16 as managers.
- 4. Deals with those who fail to live up to the agreement.
- 5. Deals with accounts, disbursements, deeds.
- 6. Defaulted shares returned to the benefit of all.





- 7. Allotted shares can be sold only to other original purchasers. To other than original purchasers only upon approval of the Council.
- 8. Original deeds from Indians to be kept by Benedict Arnold, Sr.
- 9. Appoints John Sanford as secretary.
- 10. Power to survey island and determine acreage of each purchaser, assess cost proportionately, authorizes highways, reserves 60 two acre shares for a town, and acreage for town plot, Artillery Garden etc.
- 11. Rules for fencing property.
- 12. Dutch Island to be held in common for pasturage, each purchaser having same interest as given in Article 2.

Lastly—Joseph Clarke authorized to subscribe for his brother John Clarke, "who is in England."

The agreement is signed by the following 100 names. The fraction after the name is the amount of their interest in the purchase.

\*William Coddington 1/20

\*Richard Smith 1/40

John Cranston 1/40

\*Francis Brinley 1/40

\*Caleb Carr 1/40 Mark Lucar 1/200

Edward Richmond 1/300

\*Samuel Billing 1/300 Edward Larkin 1/250

\*John Green 1/40

\*George Bliss 1/405

Bartholomew Hunt 1/450

\*Thomas Tooly 1/250

Richard Knight 1/67

James Smith 1/40

Henry Stevens 1/300

William Codman 1/300

\*Thomas Valston 1/200 Thomas Waite 1/250

\*Robert Taylor 1/300

Thomas Baker 1/300

\*Benedict Arnold 1/20

Walter Congrave 1/60

Wm. Baulston 1/60

\*Wm. Brenton 1/40

James Barker 1/40

Wm. Lytherland 1/300

\*Thomas Clarke 1/111

Stephen Wilcocks 1/200

\*Tobias Saunders 1/200

John Roome 1/54

\*Richard Tew 1/54

James Babcock 1/67

Thomas Dunger 1/200

Thomas Cass 1/900

Marmaduke Ward 1/450

\*Emanuel Wooly 1/200

Joseph Terry 1/200

\*Thomas Fish 1/300

George Lawton 1/200

\*John West 1/450

\*Richard Sisson 1/250

Latham Clarke 1/300

\*Anthony Law 1/200

\*John Tripp 1/250

William Havens 1/200

\*John Green Jr. of Warwick 1/200

\*Anthony Ravincroft 1/900

\*Thomas Goud 1/111

\*Edward Greenman 1/111

Thomas Hart 1/200

John Fones 1/900

John Fairfield 1/300

\*John Cooke 1/250

Robert Burdick 1/300

Jeremiah Clarke 1/300

\*Thomas Manchester 1/300

Andrew Langworth 1/450

\*Christopher Almy 1/200

Robert Spink 1/300

\*Thomas Waterman 1/200 \*Lawrence Turner 1/200 Richard Card 1/200 Matthew West 1/200 \* Tames Rogers 1/40 Thomas Brownell 1/67 \*John Anthony 1/300 Joseph Ladd 1/450 \*William Case 1/300 \*Richard Dune 1/200 Samuel Hubbard 1/300 \*Richard Smith Jr. 1/40 \*Edward Thurston 1/200 \*Samuel Sanford 1/150 John Peabody 1/40 \*John Sanford 1/40 Wm. Vaughan 1/111 \*Robert Carr 1/40 \* Joseph Clarke 1/54 \*John Clarke 1/54

Adam Mott Sr. 1/111

William Weeden 1/111

Thomas Cook Jr. 1/111 Robert Bennett 1/250 John Briggs 1/111 \*John Gould 1/11 \*Thomas Newton 1/300 \*Robert Hazard 1/300 \*William Hall 1/300 Richard Bulger 1/200 \*Nicholas Brown 1/300 William Earll 1/300 \*John Porter 1/111 John Vaughn 1/200 Daniel Wilcox 1/111

\*Thomas Oliver 1/900 Ichabod Sheffield 1/450 Henry Bull 1/111 \*Will Jefferay 1/200

\*Thomas Newton 1/300

The names Valentine Whitman 1/40, John Easton 1/111, Daniel Gould 1/111, Randall Houlden 1/150, Jeremiah Willis 1/200, and Henry Timberlake 1/200 appear in Article 2 of the agreement but are not among the signatures to the agreement, neither do they show on the Fisher map. Evidently they disposed of their interest as there are names on the map which do not appear in the agreement.

Chief Cashanaquont lived up to his promise to satisfy all other Sachems laying claim to the island as there are deeds of conveyance entered upon the records from Sachems Towisibbam, Quasaquann, Caskotape, and Wequa-

Joshua Fisher made a survey and computed the area of the island at about 6.000 acres. A copy of this map, made about the same time as the original, is in the Carr Homestead, on Carr's Lane. This is the oldest map of the island in existence.

It was agreed to allot 4,800 acres for division among the proprietors, 260 for a township, 20 acres of which were to be used for an Artillery Garden, a "place for buriel of ye dead," a prison house and other uses. 240 acres were reserved for a townplot to be divided in the proportion of one acre of townplot to 20 acres of farm land. The remaining land was reserved for highways and for reallotment to those whose lands proved to be undesirable.

It will thus be seen that the originators of the purchase had quite an elaborate scheme. The farm lands were to be at the north and south ends

<sup>\*</sup>Denotes that these names appear on original map drawn by Joshua Fisher -see page 8-9.

of the island, and the four rod road, now Narragansett Avenue, formerly Ferry Road, was to be the main road for the townplot.

It was further agreed that the land was to be divided in the same proportion as the amount subscribed, and those subscribing the larger amount had the first choice of location, thus we read:

"William Coddington of Newport Esq., & Benedict Arnold, Senr. shall each of them pay one twentieth part of the whole charge and shall each of them receive one twentieth part of the premised purchase, and William Brenton, Merchant shall pay one fortieth part and one, one hundred and eleventh part of the whole charge and shall receive one fortieth part and one, one hundred and eleventh part of the premised purchase. And Richard Smith Senr., Capt. John Cranston, Richard Smith Junr. Robert Carr, Caleb Carr, Francis Brinley, James Barker, James Rogers, John Sailes, John Green, Valentine Whitman, and John Sanford shall each of them pay one fortieth part of the whole charge and shall receive one fortieth part of the premised purchase."

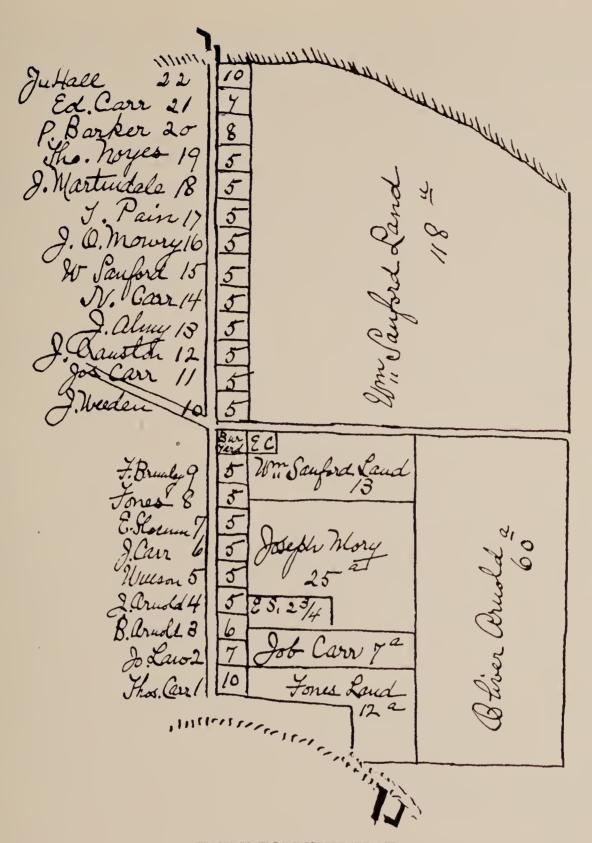
And so it goes through the whole list of 100 names until the last, which reads:

"Thomas Case, Anthony Ravenscraft, Thomas Oliver, and John Fones shall each of them pay one nine hundreth part of the whole charge and shall each of them receive one nine hundredth part of the premised purchase."

In a statement dated August, 1715, now in the possession of the Newport Historical Society, Francis Brinley writes, in part;

"After this (the above agreement) was accomplished, the surveyor took time to place each proprietors choyce upon the draught according to the agreement, and then presented ye draught to the company met on purpose at Mr. Arnolds house ye usual place of meeting, and was well accepted by the company to their full satisfaction and content, as by the said draught may be clearly seen. Every particular person pricked out on the plat in the outside bounds thereof, their names written therein and the quantity of acres therein included, and all the highways pricked both they that went along the island and cross ye island. The great highway along the island was four rod wide, the rest two rod wide. Afterwards the surveyor was ordered to goe upon the land and lay out every particular mans property upon the land, as it was pricked out on ye draught, and in ye same place, which being accomplished the surveyor presented his draught again to the company, met att the usual place, and in the bounds of every mans land he marked trees that stood in the lines, and where trees were wanting he drove stakes into the ground or set heaps of stones. After every proprietor settled his lands, some sooner and some later, as to them seemed meet and convenient. The aforesaid John Green mentioned in the draught was the first person to improve his land, and immediately sowed hay seed on his land where about he intended to build a house. Note—that the two hundred and forty acres for the Town plot was never partitioned as the farms were, and was generally sold one to another, and the buyers agreed among themselves.'

The original plan of the purchasers provided for town plots as well as farming sections. The four rod road, now Narragansett Avenue, connecting the east and west ferries, was the old Indian trail and along this were located the town plots. The farms were at the north and south ends of the island and every 20 acres of farm land carried one acre of town plot. But those actively interested were farmers and they generally sold or traded the town



EARLY TOWNSHIP PLAT

Courtesy of R. I. Historical Society

plot to which they were entitled. Then again the purchase of the island, with many, was simply a speculation and they sold their interest even before the property was divided. All these things resulted in great confusion and in 1680 the island was resurveyed by Robert Hazard and all the records obtainable were ordered presented to the town clerk for recording.

Even this did not get matters straightened out, for in 1703-4 the General Assembly had John Mumford and James Carder make a survey of the roads and restore them, as near as possible, to the original Fisher survey; and in 1707 the town voted that "Joseph Morey, Nicholas Carr and John W. Weeden shall

and have full power to goe and new marke bounds of ye township which was laid out by Carder and Mumford." But with all this, the matter of the Artillery Lot and highways was far from settled and what with renting, selling, fencing, building and repairing and building bridges, was to bother the town fathers for still another hundred years or more.

A great influx of people to this undeveloped land could not be expected, but evidently there was an increase in population for in 1678 Caleb Carr and Francis Brinley, on behalf of the proprietors, petitioned the General Assembly for the incorporation of the town. This was granted on November 4, 1678 "the inhabitants to have the same priviledges and libertyes as were granted to New Shoreham." The new town was named James Town in honor of James 1 of England.

Upon the granting of the charter they proceeded to draw up their form of government and in April, 1679, met together in their first Town Meeting for the election of officers.

#### TOWN MEETING FOR THE ELECTION OF OFFICERS

#### April 1679

John Fones chosen Moderator

Engaged

John Fones chosen clerk of said town

Engaged

Mr. Caleb Carr, Sen'r., Mr. Francis Brinley, Caleb Carr, Jun'r., and Nicholas Carr chosen to be Town Counsell Engaged

Ebenezer Slocum and Michaell Kally chosen to be the two constables of the said town, but Michaell Kally obstinately Refusing to take his engagement to said office, Caleb Carr, Jun'r. chosen in his stead

Ebenezer Slocum and Caleb Carr, Jun'r. Engaged to their said offices.

Peter Wells chosen town sargeant

Engaged

Nicholas Carr and Caleb Carr, Jun'r. chosen to be viewers of cattle, sheeps Swine and Horses which may be carried or transported from this Township.

John Fones

Ebenezer Slocum ye two deputies for ye court.

For over 100 years town meetings, council and proprietors meetings were held in private homes, (usually at the home of one of the officers) and in the Meeting House. From December 1776 to November 1779 (the Revolutionary period) these meetings were held at the home of Matthew Allen in North Kingstown. The first town meeting held in Jamestown after the British had left Newport was on November 10, 1779, "at the stone ferry house in this town." Although a Town Hall was ordered built as early as 1690, all records of the various meetings are dated as being held at some private house. The first Town Hall stood on the east side of the North Road just south of the North Ferry Road.

The inhabitants were predominantly farmers and the vision of a settlement on the town plots, four miles south of North Ferry Road, was not realized until many years later. The only part of the town plot which was used was the Artillery Garden. It was evidently intended to have this for a village green but it was early used for a burial ground and is so used today. There are stones standing that bear dates in the early 1700's.

There were four main highways, one running across the island on the old Indian trail through the proposed town plot, now called Narragansett Avenue. One ran north and south from this road to the north end of the island now called North Road, another from the Indian Trail south to the town beach at Mackerel Cove, now called Southwest Avenue, and the other, North Ferry Road, now Eldred Avenue, ran east and west connecting the sailboat ferry landings.

The development of additional roads became very complicated. The great majority of the farms extended from the main road to either the east or west shore and it would seem as if the one main road was sufficient. It is unfortunate that there is no copy of the survey and map made by Mumford and Carter in 1707, for, by the records, it would almost seem as if there were roadways running east and west separating all the farms one from another. As early as 1681 Major Peleg Sanford petitioned the town "that he have liberty to take in part of ye middle highway which lieth between ye land of Lieut. Nicholas Carr and ye land which he is about to fence in which he purchased of Mr. Jahleel Brenton." This the town allowed "provided he doth set up a pare of bars or hang a gate so that the inhabitants may have a Recourse for themselves or through his land when occasion doth require."

Then in 1707 it was voted "that whare two parsons Land lyt on ye Cross highways they two parsons agreeing shall have the liberty for seven years to fence in said Highways leaving soficront bars or gates for people to pass with horse and cart, they paying 10 shillings a year into ye town treasurer for every such highway so fenced."

In 1729 it was voted "that the north highway between Teddeman Hull and francis Brinley and Nicholas Carr be soaled, also the highway which runs through Clark Rodmans Land be sold." Each year new rentals were added until finally there were so many rentals, instead of voting each renewal separately, they were all renewed by one vote. And so for nearly 100 years the town rented and sold highways. Some paid as high as 15 pounds a year rental and others 2 bushels of corn; some of the roads were sold at the rate of 200 pounds an acre. By the number of rentals and sales appearing in the records these transactions must have brought in a considerable revenue to the town. But all this led to great confusion which continued, in a small way, up to 50 years ago when, in driving to Beaver Tail, nearly a dozen gates had to be opened and closed as you passed from one farm to another.

There is a story told about the proposal to close one of these roads because it was not used. This was opposed by Robert Watson and to prove

that it was used, he yoked up his oxen to the ox cart and drove up and down it all day with his wife contentedly knitting, seated in a chair placed in the cart. That night the opposition felled a number of trees, thus closing the road, but old Robert cleared these up the next morning and resumed his solemn journey. In the end, however, he lost out and the road was closed. A later owner of the property deeded that part of the farm back to the town to be used for a road if it was ever thought best to open it again. This happened some seventy-five years ago and was the last of the controversies regarding roads.

As originally laid out the North Road went through a marsh or pond about a mile north of the township road, and was impassable. In 1681 it was voted "that Jno Fones and Ebenezer Slocum.... treat with Joseph Remington and agree with him about a highway at ye sea syd on ye east syde of ye island until such time as ye other highway be made passable." They evidently came to an agreement and a road was opened along the east side of the island, turning west at Potter's Cove, joining the North Road at the present site of the Quaker Meeting House. The east-west portion of this road was later called Deputy Lane and is now known as Weeden's Lane. Evidently this road was sufficient until 1722 when it was voted "that there shall be a Bridge Built over the Pond in the Main Highway by the inhabitants of the island." From the records it would seem that the bridge or bridges (there were 2 bridges in the early 1900's) and the connecting parts of the highway were not completed until 1729. In June, 1725, the General Assembly voted "that there be 10 pounds out of the general treasury allowed to Jamestown toward the building of a bridge on their island."

It was the general practice to turn cattle out to pasture on the highways. Some trouble evidently developed for in 1698 it was voted "that no hog nor hogs, nor pig nor pigs shall be keep in the highways without a yoak on them". In the same year it was voted "that Nicholas Carr is apointed by the freemen of this meeten to gitt timber and build a pare of stocks and to gitt timber and make a pound and put them both up att nere John Weedens corner nex to the highway with all expedishon and he is to be paid by the town for his Paines." Probably the pound was built. In 1717 the council passed a vote prohibiting the pasturing of cattle in the highway "except young stock under one year old", and ordered that a pound "35 foot long and 25 feet Broad be made in this town". Fines for violation were "2 pence for every Sheep and 6 pence per head for every horse or mair with all charges of poundage". The cost of the pound was £6 16 s 7p. All through the records there are votes to build a new pound, buy new locks, hinges and hasps for the pound. There was always a pound and a pound keeper up to 60 years ago.

But the building of the stocks was a different story. At the meeting of 1698, quoted above, Nicholas Carr was ordered to build a "pare of Stocks". There is no record of payment for building the stocks but there is for building the pound, so it is doubtful if the stocks were built. In 1717 Nicholas Carr and Richard Tew were voted overseers to see "that a pound, pair of

stocks and whipping post" were built. The pound was built and paid for but no account rendered for the stocks, and again it is doubtful if they were built, for in May, 1724, the proprietors voted "that Thomas Carr Build a pare of Stocks and Set them up at Aabell Franklins house". Thomas Carr, as also his father Nicholas, was a Quaker and such form of punishment was not in accord with his religious convictions. Evidently the stocks were not built for on May 16, 1738 it was ordered that "Richard Tew procure Irons and Stuff and build a pair of Stocks". The only evidence that the stocks ever were built is in the records of August 13, 1773, when it was voted "that a Pair of Stocks be erected and set up where the old ones formerly stood in this town". Nothing has been found in the records to indicate that either the stocks or the whipping post ever were used except, possibly, as hitching posts for horses.

In the original survey of the island 20 acres were reserved for an "Artillery Garden, a place for buriel of ye dead, a prison house and for other public uses", and a part for the township plot which the proprietors anticipated would be built up along the old Indian trail, the 4 rod road, now Narragansett Avenue. But the settlers preferred to build their houses on their farms and the settlement on the town plot did not materialize for many years. Evidently the proprietors saw a chance for revenue from the Artillery Garden for in 1725 it was voted "that David Green Soe down the Artillery Lot and turn it out by the last of August next" and in October he was allowed to sow it down to rye. In 1731 it was rented to John Martin for 20 shillings per annum, but "the Town shall have the liberty of burying their dead during his possession". Evidently Martin did not keep it in good condition for in 1745 Abel Franklin was appointed to build a fence around it "of good Chestnut Rails and good oak Stakes" for which he was paid £24 plus £7 for cartage. In 1746 it was rented to John Clarke for 30 shillings. In 1717 Martin had it again and kept it until 1757 when it was rented to Jonathan Hill and William Mott, but Martin refused to give it up, demanding that it be surveyed. Then in 1759 he voluntarily promised "to Fence out the towns burying lot and deliver possession thereof to the town". In 1771 a town meeting was held "to know what shall be done with the town artillery or Burying Lot whether the house there on standing shall be sold or not for the Benefit of the town". It is not known who built the house but the records reveal that at one time it was used for housing the town's poor. Some of the older inhabitants are of the opinion that it was also the first school house.

When the town was incorporated in 1678 it is doubtful if there were 150 people living on the island, but to these few, conducting affairs of the town was a responsibility which they assumed in a serious manner as can be seen by the voluminous records left for posterity. There were always expenses, particularly in connection with the roads, and the town was always in need of money. One of the sources of revenue was the granting of licenses for "retailing strong liquors" and "keeping houses of entertainment", as seen by the following:

## Act of Counsell 20th of May 1701 at the house of Stephen Remington

"The Clarke of the Counsel in the sd town is ordered to give Capt. Josiah Arnold a License to keep a house of entertainment he, the sd Arnold paying the Clarke 10 pounds for his License and give in bond to the Clarke on Recognizance.

"Johnathan Marsh has a License granted him to keep a house of entertainment for one hole yeare from the date above.

Also Stephen Remington is admitted to keep a house of entertainment for one hole yeare for the trouble of his house att town meeting."

In 1705 Thomas Parker paid 7 shillings 6 pence for a license but "Samuel Batty is admitted to Sell Drink for one hole year . . . . . it being in consideration of having the benefit of holding town meeting in his house". In 1729 at a council meeting at William Batty's house a license was granted to him but he had to pay 20 shillings. Down through the years licenses were granted to a great many, among whom we find Capt. Benjamin Sheffield, Thomas Fowler, John Remington, Thomas Spencer, John Clark, Thomas Eldred, William Martin, John Tennant, Abel Franklin, Ebenezer Slocum, William Hazard and many others. Many of these men operated a ferry or had a house near the ferry landing where people could wait for the boat. These ferries were only sailboats and often people would have to wait many hours for the boat to come in. The waiting passengers no doubt found such "houses of entertainment" very convenient and the "entertainment" very acceptable.

For many years after the incorporation of the town the only new people to come to the town were those who owned a piece of land and had decided to live there. A census taken by the Board of Trade in 1730 gave Jamestown 312 inhabitants. But around 1740 the records show that unknown people were coming in and members of the council were appointed to investigate them and see if they were likely to become a burden on the town. If they had a certificate from the town from which they came or had sufficient visible means of support, they were allowed to stay, but if these were lacking, they were called before the council for further questioning and if they could not convince the council that they would became desirable citizens, they were ordered to depart the town. If they could get someone to give bond for them they were allowed to stay. The town required a bond of 500 pounds.

A story has been handed down in the Watson family concerning the two brothers who came over from Narragansett to settle on Jamestown. They had neither certificate nor money and the investigating committee recommended that they be sent back to Narragansett. But somehow they convinced the council that they never would become a town charge and were allowed to stay. In the years following they prospered and eventually owned two large farms, one on the Beaver Tail road, now known as the Audley Clarke farm, at one time the Conanicut Golf Club. The other took in the entire north end of the island, from east to west shore, as far south as, and including, the Cajacet farm. An old letter of a sea captain states that, as he sailed around

the north point, the meadows of the Point Farm looked like strips of velvet, they were so clean and well kept. The old Watson Homestead was standing up to 50 years ago, when it was burned to the ground.

But others were not so fortunate, particularly the Indians. Only a comparatively few years previous, the Narragansett tribe was supreme in all New England. They had developed a social state of a kind, they had their settled villages, loved their children and their family life was beyond reproach. Then came the white man with a civilization they could not understand and a mode of living entirely foreign to theirs. Then came the Great Swamp fight, maneuvered entirely by the Masschusetts, Plymouth and Connecticut colonies, and their winter camp was destroyed and the tribe almost annihilated. Those escaping went to other inland tribes or to the white colonists of Rhode Island, whom they looked upon more as friends than enemies. The result is found in the records:

#### Town Council Oct. 26 1741

Where as Benjamin Sheffield haveing Complaining to the Council that Indian Antony and his Squaw Content and Daughter Remembrance Being Destitute of Sustinance Voted an act by this Council that ye said Council give Indenture of a Sartan Indian Gall Called Remembrance Daughter of Indian Anthony and his former Squaw coled Content unto Ebenezer Slocum and his wife Mary and Untall she arive unto the age of Eighteen years in a common form of Apprentice.

#### Town Council Oct. 2nd 1745

Whereas there was an order of the Town Council, made the sixteenth Day of June A. D. 1741, to bind a certain Indian Girl Remembrance, Daughter of Indian Anthony & his Squaw Content to Ebenzer & Mary Slocum and the Clerk of said Council was then ordered to give an Indenture of the said Girl to the said Slocum, but the said Clerk neglected the same. And whereas the said Ebenezer Slocum made complaint to this present Council, that the said Girl hath absented herself from his Service. He therefore prays that the said Girl may be bound to him according to said order of Council. It is therefore resolved that the said Girl be forwith bound to said Ebenezer & Mary Slocum, and with them to serve till she arive to the Age of Eighteen Years. In Consideration of which service, the said Slocum, shall provide all things needful & necessary for such an apprentice. And that when she shall compleat her Servitude, the said Slocum, shall give to the said Girl, one Suit of wearing Apparel worth Ten pounds beside her common wearing cloths, And the Clerk of the Council is ordered to sign the Indenture.

#### Town Council May 25 1749

Samuel Clarke Esq made information to this Council that a boy named Daniel Pettese (son of John Pettese) is left upon his hands for a maintenance & therefore pray that the said boy may be bound to him as an apprentice till he shall arrive to the age of twenty one years that is from the first day of April 1749 to the first day of April 1763, which is granted, the said Clark learning the boy to read, and write and Cypher as far as the rule of three: and when he shall faithfully compleat his Servitude to discharge him with a good suit of cloths besides his common wearing apparel.

There also was a stern justice administered which is worthy of consideration even in our own times.

#### Town Council Aug. 27 1754

Whereas Information has been made to this Council, that one Jack Marsh an Indian Man who is grown old and very decrepit, & utterly uncapable of Maintaining himself, and unless timely care be taken of him/ he will perish in the Winter Season, & whereas the said Jack has a son named Japhet, who lives in an idle dissolute manner taking no honest care to procure a Livelihood. And as it is the incumbent Duty of all Children, to contribute as much as in them lies, toward the Support of their aged Parents, it is therefore the Duty of the said Japhet to afford the s'd Jack his Father all the assistance in his Power. The Council taking the same into Consideration do vote and resolve and it is voted and resolved that the said Japhet be bound out by the Overseers of the Poor of this Town to the highest Bidder for the Space of one Year. And the money arising thereby to be appropriated for the support of himself and his aged Father.

Information being made to the Council, that an Indian Squaw named Betty Low is grown old & is very poor & helpless & hath need of the towns assistance and that the said Betty Low hath at a considerable expense brought up a grandson of hers, an Indian boy of between nineteen and twenty years of age named Ben Easton. It is therefore the oppinion of the Council, for the relief and Support of the said Betty Low in her weak condition, the said boy be bound out an apprentice by the overseer of the Poor of this town to such person as will give the Greatest Sum of money for him untill he shall arrive to the age of twenty one years and that in the mean time the said Overseer provide for the said Betty Low.

That there was misfortune among the white people is shown by the sad story of the family of Nicholas and Sarah Fowler, copied "verbatim ac litteratim" from the records:

# Town Council at house of Mr. Oliver Hazard May 23d Day A. D. 1761

Whereas Sarah Fowler, the wife of Nicholas Fowler, late of s'd Jamestown, did in her s'd husbands absence Privately, on the Twenty Second of this instant Past, at Night Move out of s'd Town, & carried away with her allmost all her s'd husbands house-hold Goods, & at the same time left to be maintained by the Town three small children poor & unprovided for And the Council taking the same into consideration do Vote & Resolve, and it is voted by this Council that the Overseer of the poor of s'd Town sign an Indenture of a Boy (Belonging to s'd Nicholas & Sarah,) Named Joshua Smith Cowel Fowler, unto John Hull of s'd Jamestown, & his heirs, Executors & Administrators, untill s'd Boy shall arrive to the age of Twenty-one years, that the s'd John Hull shall provide for s'd Boy During his s'd apprenticeship sufficient Meat, washing Lodging & Clothing & shall Likewise during s'd Term, Teach or Cause the s'd boy to be Taught to Read, write & cypher as far as the Rule of Three. And the Expiration of s'd term shall Discharge the s'd Apprentice with one good new Suit of Clothes from head to foot, Besides his Common wearing Apparel.

It was also Voted that the s'd Overseers like wise sign an Indenture of a Girl (the Daughter of s'd Nicholas & Sarah) named Elizabeth Fowler unto Standfast Wyatt, of s'd town his heirs, Executors & administrators, until s'd Girl shall arrive to the age of Eight-Teen years that s'd Wyatt provide for s'd Girl During her apprenticeship sufficient Meat, washing, Lodging & Clothing, & shall During s'd Term Teach or Cause the s'd Girl to be Taught to Read & write, and at the expiration of s'd Term shall Discharge her, with one Good new suit of Clothes besides her Every day wearing apparrel.

It is also Voted that Oliver Martin be, & he hereby is impowered Immediately to attach, and Take into his Costody all the Goods that is now in the house of Nicholas Fowler, and all Other Goods, That he shall have information of, Belonging to s'd Nicholas Fowler, and them to safely Keep in Costody for s'd Town untill further Orders from This Council & that there be a Receipt Granted for the Purpose.

It is also Voted by this Council that Azariah Tew one of the overseers of the poor of this Town, immediately Take and keep at the Charge of s'd Town, Ellenor Fowler, untill Further Orders from s'd Council.

#### Town Council, by adjournment at house of Mr. Oliver Hazard, May 26, 1761

It is voted that the indenture of Charles Fowler which his mother Sarah Fowler signed to John Case Esq of South Kingstown Bareing date of the Fourteenth Day of June, one Thousand Seven hundred and fifty Eight be confirmed to s'd John Case, by an indenture on the same and approved By s'd Council.

wee the subscribers do Decent from the above vote for the following reasons, to wit. That the s'd Sarah Fowler had no Lawfull rite to Bind out s'd Boy without her Husbands Consent, & now hath absented herself and left several small Children in a perishing condition, & whereas the s'd Charles is at this time capable of earning Considerable more than his own living, & hath been Ever since he hath lived with s'd Master; we think all his wages over and above his Maintainance ought to be appropriated towards the supporting his Distressed Sisters, and the relief of s'd Town untill he arrive to the age of Twenty one years.

Edward Carr Daniel Weeden Jr.

It is voted that Tamesin Pugh take Ellener, the Daughter of Nicholas Fowler & Keep at the Charge of the Town, & that she be allow'd for the same Three pounds old Tenor p week so long as she shall keep her & that she have an old bed for s'd Child to lay on.

#### Town Council Aug. 25, 1761.

Whereas Tamesin Pugh exhibited an account by her Charged against the town of Forty pounds Ten shillings old Tenor (for keeping of Ellener Fowler) and the s'd account being duly examined It is voted that the s'd account be allowed & paid out of the Town Treasury which was paid into the hands of Dan Weeden Ir. in the presence of s'd Council.

#### Town Council Jan. 2 1762

It is voted that Tamesin pugh have an Order to Draw out of the Town Treasury of this Town (as soon as their shall be a sufficient sum in s'd Treasury) the sum of Thirty Nine Pounds old Tenor, the same being for keeping of Ellener Fowler thirteen weeks from the 25th of august Last with Ten Shillings Due to her for the Board of s'd Child Last quarter (Novemb 24 to)

#### Town Council March 27, 1762

Tamesin exhibited an account of £148 by her charged against the Town for Keeping of Ellenor Fowler from the 23 of may to the 23 of march following (at which time the s'd child Deceas'd) for mending her Cloaths, providing necessaries during her sickness, finding a Coffin & other things to bury s'd Child in, & the s'd acc't being duly Examin'd and a Just Ballance found due on s'd acc't of £68—10s-oop It is voted that the same be & hereby is allow'd that the amount There of

be paid the s'd Tamesin pugh out of the Town Treasury as in full of her acc't against the Town."

To meet expenses the town had income from licenses, rentals and sale of highways, rental of Artillery lot and taxes, or, as they ealled them, rates. At first levying rates was an easy matter. At the Quarterly Meeting they added up their bills and if there was not sufficient money to pay them, they levied a rate, as in the following:

#### Town Council—16th day of the 11th month 1704-5

Whereas the town is indebted unto Several persons and there being no money in the treasury to make satisfaction It is therefore ordered and enacted that there shall be a Rate made and assessed on the Proprietors and Inhabitants of this Town to the value of Six Pounds in money, each and every person according to proportion . . . and that the Rate makers are to warn the inhabitants to bring in the account of their ratable estate."

This method sufficed for a number of years but in the early 1700's the eolony began issuing paper money and values became so complicated that the rate makers had the added duty of visiting each inhabitant and valuing the taxable property. It was the beginning of a period of violent inflation and the value of paper money fluctuated almost daily. Thus we find that in 1761 William Hazard, John Gardner and Benj. Carr charged the town 97 pounds 4 shillings (11/4%) old tenor for levying on the inhabitants the sum of 7816 pounds, old tenor. In another place it was ordered "that the Clarke demand of the Treasurer 1 piece of eight for to buy a cloth to make a bag to earry the books in". Thus we have old tenor, new tenor, hard money, legal money, to say nothing of the foreign money brought in by the vessels in the over-seas trade, which gives us references to Spanish Dollars, double Johannes, pistoles, guineas, pieces of eight, moidores, shillings, farthings, mites and many others. On July 19,1689, it was voted "that the town Treasurer hire as much Lawful Money at 6 per eent as will be equivalent to one Hundred Pounds old Ten'r Reckoning Silver Spanish Mill'd Dollars at Eight pounds per piece." In 1780 the Town Council voted "that John Carr be allowed for warning the town the four quarter Meetings a salary of twenty-five Pounds old Ten'r reekoning Dollars at 8 pounds per piece." In 1781 72 Continental dollars was equal to one hard dollar. So complicated and unsatisfactory was this that trading, wherever possible, was done by barter.

In looking over the town's records of disbursements, charges are found for building roads, assessments levied for Dr. John Clark and Roger Williams while in England, taking eare of the poor, transporting undesirable people off the island and the ordinary town's expenses. It would seem that most eouncil meetings held at members houses opened with a dinner, charges for which were allowed ranging from 6 to 17 pounds. Oliver Hazard charged 26 pounds 16 shillings for 17 dinners and one bowl of punch. In 1739 the eouncil ordered the town to "pay John Hull for 5 weeks board for Jones and 8 quarts Rum at 2p—total 12 shillings". But the most unusual charge was when the town treasurer was put in jail.

## Town Treasurer in Gaol Quarter Meeting Jan. 18 1774

"James Carr Junr Town Treasurer presented an account by him charged against the town the same being for cash he paid to the Sherif for the fees on an Excision (action) served on him for the Colony rate, 9/ & his charges Going to Goal 6/ and the town Meeting taking the same into consideration do vote that the same be & hereby is allowed the amount thereof being fifteen shillings Lawful Money be paid the said James Carr Jr out of the town treasury."

From these records of the town's various activities we have a fair picture of those early years. Unfortunately, aside from these records, there seems to be little information available. An old newspaper clipping, writer unknown, states that in a census taken in 1730, by order of the King, "the population was found to be 321 in all, 222 whites, 80 negroes and 19 Indians. This showed an increase of 115 souls in 22 years." It goes on to state that in 1775 the population was 556 (the Rhode Island Colonial Records give 568) made up of 394 whites, 130 negroes, 32 Indians. Of the latter 9 belonged to the family of Francis Dick, the only household entirely of Indians. From the detailed list given, the 394 whites constituted 67 families, 35 of which owned slaves. It is assumed that some of the Indians were bound by indentures. The larger slave owners were Samuel Carr 5, Edward Carr 4, Thomas Carr 8, Daniel Carpenter 5, Nicholas Carr 4, John Eldred 6, Jonathan Gardner 4, Isaac Howland 10, Edward Hull 10, Stephen Hazard 5, John Martin 5, Gersham Remington 4, George Tew 8, Joseph & Benjamin Underwood 6, Daniel Weeden 6, and Daniel Weeden Jr 8. Bristol Hull had 11 Indians.

In going over the records for those early days the names most often mentioned in administering the affairs of the town are: Batty, Brinley, Carr, Clarke, Coggeshall, Eldred, Fones, Fowler, Franklin, Gardner, Green, Grinold, Hammond, Hazard, Howland, Hull, Knowles, Sheffield, Slocumb, Tew, Underwood, Weeden. Many of these names have been forgotten. Only 8 families are now living or holding land on Conanicut in the original family name who owned land at the time of the Revolution—the Arnolds, Carrs, Clarkes, Hammonds, Howlands, Hulls, Knowles and Weedens.

In approaching the events that led up to the Revolutionary war it must be remembered that from 1730 Newport developed an ever increasing foreign trade and for many years previous to 1775 surpassed New York and Boston as a commercial center. Just previous to the war over 200 vessels were engaged in foreign trade and over 400 coasting vessels sailed from this harbor as well as a regular line of packets to London. Thousands of seamen thronged the docks, warehouses were overflowing, there were 17 manufacturers alone of sperm oil and candles, fortunes were made in the slave trade and the distilling of rum, and ship yards were scattered all along the shores of the bay. Great quantities of produce, particularly sheep and cheese were shipped from Narragansett, a great amount of which went to Newport via the ferries. Wealth was abundant and prosperity every man's portion. Jamestown could

not help but share in this general condition and, that she was alert to bettering herself, is shown in the vote of the town meeting of December 26, 1767:

"It is voted that the Hon. Josiah Arnold Esq. William Hazard Esq. Oliver Hull Esq. Mr. Daniel Weeden, Mr. John Weeden, Capt. John Eldred, Capt John Gardner, & Mr. John Remington or the major part of them, be, & they hereby are apointed a committee to consider of the most Salutary measures to be Recommended to this town, for incouraging Industry, frugality, & the Manufactures of this colony, as well to Discourage the use of British & foreign Manufactures and Superfluities imported from abroad; & that they make Report of their procedings to this meeting which stands adjourned to the third Tuesday of January next."

But England needed money and as early as 1733 imposed an import tax on molasses. This was a severe blow to the importers. In 1731 New England imported sufficient molasses to distill 1,260,000 gallons of rum. This was shipped to Africa and traded for slaves who were mostly sold in the West Indies, where more molasses was bought to be brought to New England, mostly Newport, to be distilled into more rum. Little by little more taxes were levied and smuggling became an accepted, if not an honored, means of livelihood. To enforce these taxes and stop the smuggling, England sent revenue ships, and Narragansett Bay, with its large amount of shipping, became the center of their activity. In 1769 the armed sloop *Liberty* was sent to Newport from Boston to enforce these laws and collect import duties. She seized a Connecticut brig and sloop and brought them into Newport.

The mistreatment of the captain of the seized brig so angered the citizens of Newport that, by a subterfuge, they managed to get the *Liberty's* men ashore, after which someone went out and cut her cable and she drifted ashore. The citizens then seized all her small boats, dragged them up Long Wharf to the Common where they were burned. On July 31, 1769, the Newport *Mercury* printed the following:

"Last Saturday the Sloop *Liberty* was floated by a high tide and drifted over to Goat Island, and is grounded near the north end, near the place where the pirates were hanged. What this prognosticates we leave to the determination of the astrologers", and later, August 17," Last Monday evening, just after the storm of rain, hail and lightening, the Sloop *Liberty* was discovered to be on fire, and continued burning for several days".

Field, in his "State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations" says, "This was not in itself a great deed, but it stands in history as the first overt act of the impending revolution."

The Boston Tea Party occurred December 16, 1773, and on February 10, 1774, at a town meeting the following resolution was passed:

"Considering the Greate importance in Preserving to ourselves & Posterity our Indubitable & Inherent Rights do Vote and it is Voted and Resolved by this Meeting that for preventing any tea subject to a duty sent out by the East India Company being Landed in this town, we do Willingly and heartily Join in the s'd Resolves Containing N.N. nine, and to the utmost of our power will stand by and Support our Brethren in this and the sister Colony's in all such Just and Laudable Measures as may preserve to us our Just Rights and priveledges as Englishmen, and with

thanks do highly applaud our Bretheren in this and the Sister Colony's for their Spirited & patriotic Resolution in their Early Standing forth to Curb the arbitrary Mandates of an overbearing Ministerial plan of Government tending to Slavery, that thereby we hope to maintain the Liberties of our Country, we do also return our thanks to the towns of Newport and Westerly in this Colony & that Edward Carr Esq., Benj. Underwood Esq., Capt. Edward Hull, Capt. Samuel Carr, Mr. John Eldred, Mr. Daniel Weeden Jr. & Mr. Paine Hammond or the major part of them be a Com'tte for this town to correspond with other Committees appointed in this & the sister Colony's & that to Govern themselves if they see fit agreeable to the Eight Resolves of the town of Newport, & that a Copy of the Proceedings of this Town Meeting be transmitted to the Committee of Correspondence for the s'd town of Newport.

Early in 1774 the Port of Boston was closed and Gen. Gage, commissioned as governor of Massachusetts, took possession of the town. On September 10, 1774, a resolution was passed at the Jamestown town Meeting "that a subscription be opened in the town for raising a sum of money or produce either in new milch cheese, fat sheep, or cash.... for supporting the poor of the town of Boston in the great American cause for Liberty."

The Revenue ships were increasingly active and quite often shots were directed at places on the island. Several years ago, when a trench was dug near the foundation wall of the Carr Homestead located at about the middle of the northern half of the island, a cannon ball was found buried in the ground about four feet deep. Experts pronounced it a Revolutionary cannon ball.

On April 22, 1775, the General Assembly voted that

"Mr. Thomas Freebody, William Greene, and Joshua Babcock, Esqs. be and they are hereby appointed a committee to proportion to the several towns in this Colony, two thousand five hundred pounds of the powder, and one quarter part of the lead, bullets, and flints, belonging to this Colony, and that the following persons be appointed in the towns to receive and distribute said town's proportion:— For Jamestown, Town Treasurer

Jamestown's share: 50 lb. powder, 80 lb. lead, 320 flints."

At a town meeting, July 29, 1775, it was voted to "appoint Capt. Sam'l Carr to receive s'd Powder... and distribute same... and that there be no more than One half pound Delivered to One man and he giving his Receipt for same". In August the General Assembly voted "that all cattle and sheep, that are fit to be killed, be forthwith removed and carried off all the islands of this Colony, Rhode Island excepted and Block Island..... and the stock on Jamestown be removed to South Kingston by Sylvester Gardner and Benjamin Gardner." The record for reimbursement shows that 45 oxen, 9 cows, 444 sheep, 24 heifers, 5 bulls and 5 steers, valued at 850 pounds 9 shillings, were taken off the island. This was a great hardship and affected every family on the island.

At the June session of the General Assembly, 1775, a vote was passed "that the Committee of Safety be, and they are hereby, directed to charter two suitable Vessels, for the use of the Colony, and fit out the same in the best manner, to protect the trade of this Colony: . . . . That the largest of said



MODEL OF JOHN BROWN'S SHIP "KATY"

Courtesy of R. I. Historical Society

Made by Alfred S. Brownell and owned by George L. Miner.

vessels be manned with eighty men, exclusive of officers; and be equipped with ten guns, four-pounders, fourteen Swivil Guns, a sufficient number of Small-Arms, and all necessary warlike stores." They also appointed Abraham Whipple commander of the larger vessel, the sloop *Katy*, and Commodore of both vessels.<sup>1</sup>

The *Katy* was owned by John Brown of Providence. Shortly after he had been released from an arrest on order of Capt. Wallace of H.M.S. *Rose* and held in confinement for several days on Admiral Graves' flagship in Boston Harbor, he had the *Katy* fully armed and it was chartered to the Committee of Safety.

All summer Capt. Whipple sailed the *Katy* up and down Narragansett Bay "to protect the trade of this Colony", and it was Capt. Whipple and the *Katy* who removed all the sheep, cows and other livestock from Conanicut. Capt. Whipple also had an encounter with the sloop *Diana*, a tender of Capt. Wallace's *Rose*. The account of the engagement is told by Savage Gardner, Master of the *Diana*, in a report to Admiral Graves, as follows:

"The 15th June 1775 about 9 o'clock AM. being ordered by Captain Wallace to proceed with the Diana Sloop, a Tender to His Majesty's Ship Rose, up the River towards Providence with a Petty Officer, cleven Men and myself, armed with Small Arms and four Swivels to reconnotire the different Passages, having Intelligence of Armed Vessels being fitted out by the Rebels at Providence.

The 16th PM about half past 5. as I was standing off between the North end of Connecticut [Conanicut] Island and Gold [Gould] Island between two and three Leagues from the Ship, a Sloop coming down before the wind, I lay'd too to speak her—a little after six being within hail, She hail'd Us and told Us to bring too or she would sink Us immediately and directly fired a shot which we returned with our Small Arms and Swivels and kept a smart fire on both Sides for near half an hour, till by accident the Powder Chest with the remainder of the swivel Cartridges blew up—In this Sloop we saw Six Carriage Guns mounted and a great number of Men Onboard— The Ammunition for the Small Arms being near expended and another armed Vessel with Carriage Guns belonging to the Rebels joining and bringing Us between two fires, so that there was no possibility of saving the Vessel—I thought it prudent to run her ashore which I accordingly accomplished near the North end of Connecticut [Conanieut] and got on shore with the People and part of the Small Arms—They immediately landed a number of Men from the Vessels in whale Boats who closely pursued and fired at Us—being so closely pursued and night coming on thought it necessary to separate and Conceal Ourselves till a proper opportunity offered of joining the Ship which was accomplished the next day without the loss of one Man. Mr Stevenson the Petty officer and one Man being the only People that were hurt occasioned by 1"John Brown's Katy" by George L. Miner, Rhode Island History, July, 1943,v.2,p.76. the Powder Chest blowing up—During the course of the engagement the People behaved with the greatest Spirit.<sup>2</sup>

Sign'd Savage Gardner, Master

Thus was fired the first shot of the Revolutionary War authorized by the navy. Slowly but surely the forces of resistance were converging into a mighty stream.

On October 16, 1775, the Town Council voted

"That a Watch be set and kept in this town till further Orders from the town from Six O'Clock in the evening till Sun rise the Next morning that the watch be set and kept from Eldreds Northward Round the Point & if necessary to keep also a strict watch On the Western Shore from the Point as far down as Opposite s'd Eldgedges Shore."

It is evident that the town clerk was fearful of serious trouble for sometime previous to this he had taken all the town's records to the house of Matthew Allen in North Kingstown for safe keeping. This was a fortunate action for had he not done so, probably all the records would have been destroyed. His action was confirmed by the Town Meeting of October 21, 1775, as follows;

"It is Voted By this Meeting that the Records of this town be kept in North Kingstown Where they now are or in Some Other Secure place as the town Clerk or Council Clerk Shall think Proper untill further Order from the town."

From December 1776 to November 1779 the voters of the town went to North Kingstown for their meetings, which were held at the house of Matthew Allen.

In October, 1775, the General Assembly voted "that the soldiers at Jamestown be reinforced with a sufficient number of men to be immediately raised by John Northup with assistance of Col. Brown." A company of 14 artillery men was raised to man the 2 four pound field pieces supplied by the assembly.

The situation in Jamestown and Newport had become extremely critical. Capt. Wallace, in command of the revenue vessels, had received reinforcements. To quote from the diary of Rev. Ezra Stiles, a minister of Newport, later president of Yale University;

"The infernal Wallace with 3 men o'war, 2 or 3 more armed vessels of which one Bomb with several transports—a fleet of perhaps 8 sail is firing away to the northward and spreading or aiming to spread terror thro' the bay".

And again on November 2 he writes

"A tender cannonaded Conanicut again."

With the British vessels sailing up and down the bay, taking random cannon shots at places on the island, and with the town having the shores patrolled by local men it was inevitable that something serious would happen. It is stated by some writers that the shore patrol were firing on the British

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>Public Record Office, v.485, pp.409-413. Courtesy William G. Roelker, Director, Rhode Island Historical Society.

vessels, though they had only flint-lock muskets, and it may be that the story of Capt. John Eldred (see Old Houses— John Eldred) is true and it may have been just an act of pure wantonness on the part of the British. Whatever the immediate cause the result was the same.

On December 11, 1775, the British landed 200 men on the island and proceeded to destroy the village that had grown up along the 4 rod road—the old Indian trail. An account of this is given in the diary of Rev. Ezra Stiles:

"Dec. 10, 1775. This morning we were awakened with the conflagration of Jamestown on Conanicut. An awful sight; The bomb brigg and several Tenders full of marines went over last night, and about v o'clock or a little before day landed and set fire to the Houses. The men continued ravaging and burning 'till about Noon and returned.

"Dec. 11, 1775. About 1 o'clock yesterday morning a Bomb Brig, 1 schooner, & 2 or 3 armed sloops went to Conanicott & landed upward of Two hundred Marines Sailors & Negroes at the E. Ferry and marched in three divisions over to the W. Ferry, & set the several houses on fire there, then retreated back sett fire to almost every house on each side of the road, & several Houses and Barns some distance on the N. & S. side of the Rode, driving out Women & Children etc.

## Houses Burnt & Lost

Widow Hull	. 1 house
Jos. Clarke, Esq.	2 houses & 1 Barn
Thos. Fowler	
Ben. Ellery	
Benj. Remington	
Jno. Gardiner	2 houses & 1 Tanyard
Gov. Hutchinson	1 house
Wm. Franklin	
Abel Franklin	1 house
Bend. Robinson	1 house
Howland	1 house

16 Dwellings

A Company of Minute Men had left Conanicut the Aft. before so that there were but 40 or 50 soldiers on the Island, of which 22 were well equipped. At the Cross Rodes there was a Skirmish our pple killed one Officer of Marines and wounded 7 or 8. Not one Colonist was killed or hurt in the Skirmish. The Kings forces fired on Mr. Jno. Martin aet 80 standing at his Door and wounded him badly. Mr. Fowler had about 30 Head Cattle: these the Regulars carried off and perhaps a dozen Head more, about 30 Sheep & as many Turkeys, & some Hogs, Beds, Furniture and other plunder. They returned on board at X or XI o'clock & came to this Harbor about Noon.

The Alarm spread, & I am told there are this day Three hundred Men on Conanicutt & Eight hundred upon the Island. The Town in great Consternation.

An account also appeared in the *Providence Gazette*, December 16, 1775, under the heading "The Burning of Jamestown," as follows:

"Sunday morning last, the bomb brig, a schooner, and two or three armed sloops left the harbor of Newport and landed about two hundred marines, sailors and Negroes on the Ferry on the east side of Conanicut, from whence they immediately marched across in three divisions to the West Ferry, and after burning all

the houses near the Ferry-Place, returned towards their vessels, setting fire to almost every house on each side of the road, from the West to the East Ferry, and several houses and barns some distance on the North and South side of the road, driving out the women and children, swearing they should be burnt in the houses, if they did not instantly turn out. Captain Wallace commanded. Mr. John Martin, standing unarmed in his own door, was shot. Fifty cows and six oxen, a few sheep and hogs were taken. All were plundered of beds, wearing apparel and household furniture. They left Conanicut the same morning and got back to Newport at Noon."

Every house in the village was destroyed. They confined themselves to the village, however, so the farm houses at the north were saved. General Washington, in a letter written at Cambridge, speaks of "the barbarity of Capt. Wallace on Conanicut Island."

But even the destruction of the town, shooting the inhabitants and plundering them of their cattle and even household goods did not seem to satisfy the blood-thirsty Wallace, as is seen in later entries by Stiles:

January 2, 1776. This day some of the ships fired upon Conanicut.

February 27, 1776. Last night an Alarm was given. The Tenders fired on No. Kingston near Quonset Pt. about Midnight. Tho it is said our soldiers stationed there fired first on the Tenders sailing by. The Guards fired Alarm Guns & so the Alarm spread & propagated at once all along the shore from the Ferry to Providence where the Beacon was fired & the whole Country rushed to arms & poured down to the Sea Coast. The Flashings of the Alarm Guns seemed to be a kind of Engagement, as it appeared to our troops on Conanicott, who sent off 70 Men to the Main & notified our Head Quarters here from whence Gen. West sent off 70 more by Two o'clock in the morning. It was supposed that the Men o' War were firing on Updikes Newtown:—Mistake.

Feb. 28, The Men o' War returning along Conanicott fired on it. Our Soldiers there discharged a Canon on the ships for the first time.

March 2. The Fleet sailed northwards firing on poor Conanicott. One Gun a nine pounder there returned the fire & the shot entered Wallace's Ship.

From the Autumn of 1763, when the H.M.S. Squirrel, Richard Smith, Captain, was ordered to Newport, until the early years of the Revolutionary War, one or more British ships of war were constantly stationed in lower Narragansett Bay. By 1776, Capt. Wallace had 8 armed vessels under his command and it was feared he planned an attack on Newport. Men already had been sent to the island from the state militia and on November 21, 1776, the General Assembly made a levy of 6 men out of every 100 male inhabitants. The pitiful condition of Jamestown is found in the town records of December 3, 1776.

"This Meeting being Conven'd in Obedience to an Act of the General Assembly held at East Greenwich 21 of Nov. 1776, for Raising Six men out of every Hundred of the Male Inhabitants as last Estimated in this town to be sent to the Island of Rhode Island in ten days after the Rising of s'd Assembly to assist in Defending the s'd Island against the Ministerial fleets and armies now at war against the free and Independent States of America. This town Meeting as freemen being Met & Considering their Depopulated Distressed and Defenceless condition toward the Raising Equiping and sending forward s'd men agreeable to said act do at this time Most sensebly regret and find that 'tis out of the power of the town to Raise the Men Required by s'd Act but at the same time are Willing & Desirous to be

aiding & assisting in the Defense of Rhode Island, for that Purpose will endeavour to Inlist the six men Required of this town by s'd act equip & send then forward for the Common Defence Speedily as may be agreeable to said act. but if the town in their Now most calammitous & Distressed Situation find it out of their power to raise s'd men they humbly hope the fine for not Raising Equiping & sending them forward agreeable to s'd act may not be Exacted on the Inhabitants of the town."

A force of 600 militia, under Esek Hopkins, was sent to Newport. In February the General Assembly purchased 2000 firearms (guns with bayonet, ramrod, cartouch box) and distributed them among the towns. Benjamin Underwood received those for Jamestown. The Committee on military defenses recommended that  $4\frac{1}{2}$  companies be stationed at Jamestown. The General Assembly on May 4, 1776, two months before the Declaration of Independence by the Second Continental Congress, had renounced all allegiance to Great Britain. A company of 14 artillery men had been raised to man the 2 four pound field pieces supplied by the Assembly. Bristol, Prudence and the northern end of the Island of Rhode Island had all been devastated. Practically all the cattle had been taken off Conanicut.

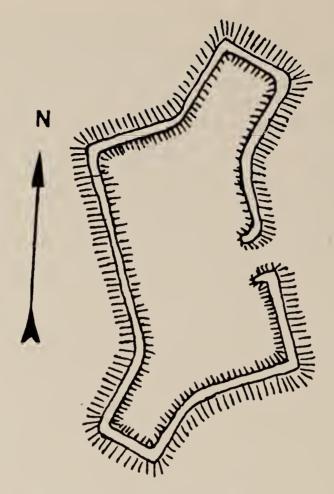
All these preparations for actual warfare were so terrorizing that a great many families took what they could and moved inland to safer territory. The Tories, and there were a number, remained and this led to the possibility of their gaining control of local governments. Jamestown was safe, having removed the town records to North Kingstown and by holding their meetings there, but Newport was in danger until the General Assembly passed an act providing that no one could vote until he had signed the Loyalty Act. That there were Tories on Jamestown in shown by the following letter, purportedly signed by all the inhabitants,

As printed in the Newport Gazette January 23, 1776. Address of Connanicot to Ld. Piercy, Commander &c after Gen. Clinton's Departure for England. In Newport Gazette of 23 Jany. 1776, "To the Rt. Hon Hugh Earl Peircy Lt. General & Commander in Chief of his Majesty's Forces within the Colony of Rhode Island &c. May it please your Excellency,

We the Subscribers Freeholders & other Inhabitants of the Town of Jamestown on the Isld of Conanicott beg Leave to congratulate your Arrival among us, as it affords the pleasing Prospect of a speedy Restoration of his Majesty's Authority & Government within this part of the Colony, where many of the Inhabitants have long suffered the severest Evils from the wanton Exercise of lawless Power.

We are so sensible of the Blessings resulting from a constant Connexion with the Parent State, that your Excellency may be assured it is our ardent Wish once more to enjoy the Kings most gracious Protection, and that we may be declared at his Peace. The many Instances of Clemency manifested by your immediate Predecessor Gen. Clinton towards the Inhabitants of Rh. Isld. & Conanicott upon his taking possession of these Islands, demand our warmest acknowledgments. And from your Lordship's known character for Benevolence & Humanity, we are persuaded that we shall be admitted to the Enjoyment of our Liberties and Properties upon the true Principles of the Constitution.

We humbly presume to represent to your Lordship that we bear true & faithful Allegiance to his Majesty King George, his sacred Person, Crown & Dignity; and do severally promise & declare that we will remain in a peaceable Obedience to his majesty, and will not take up Arms in opposition to his Authority.



SKETCH OF REVOLUTIONARY FORT

Jan. 13. Signed by all the Inhab. of Jamestown." Phps a doz. or 20 Families left out of 45 or 50 Families before the war. There were 99 Polls 1768, of which 45 paid only Poll tax; properly 45 families.

Such were the conditions when Capt. Wallace suddenly and without any warning left the bay and disappeared over the horizon.

But only for a short period was this territory to be unmolested. On December 7, 1776, Job Watson, from his watch tower on Tower Hill saw a large squadron of war vessels off Block Island headed for Narragansett Bay. It proved to be the fleet of Sir Peter Parker, consisting of 7 line-of-battle ships and four frigates convoying 70 transports carrying 6000 British and Hessian troops under the command of General Clinton. The progress of the fleet is best told by entries in the diary of Frederick Mackenzie, an officer in the British army:

British fleet sailing from New York to Newport. Command of Sir Peter Parker. (Near Fishers Island.)

Dec. 7 1776.

"A fine fair wind last night, and good weather; which continuing this morning, at four o'Clock the signal was made for the fleet to weigh and at five o'Clock the whole was under way, with a fresh wind at S. W. At 8 o'Clock we saw Block Island, at 10 Point Judith, which is the S. E. point of Connecticut, and at 12 made the Light House on the S. point of Connonicut Island at the entrance of Rhode Island harbour. The Commodore soon after made the Signal to speak with *The Experiment*, Capt. Wallace, and about 1 o'Clock that ship took the lead, and

stood up the Western Channel between Connonicut, and the Main, followed by the *Chatham*, and the *Asia*, and then by the transports and other ships, according to the form of Sailing given out.

No enemy appeared on either side as we went up.

About 2 miles from the Light House, the Rebels had a Battery or Redoubt with 4 embrazures toward the Channel. But it appeared to be abandoned.

From this entry there is no doubt that the redoubt was made by American soldiers. The earthworks of the redoubt, close to the shore on the west side of the island at Fox Hill, are still to be seen and are accessible to the public. As far as is known this is the only fortification on the island at that period, erected by Americans. However, through the records references are found to a Dumpling Rock Battery. Of this battery Maj. G. W. Cullum says:

"Neither the English nor French maps of 1777 show any fortification at the Dumplings; but in 1778 batteries must have been built by the British, for Gen. Pigot, British commander here, in his dispatch Aug. 31, 1775 to Sir Henry Clinton says, 'The next morning the guns on Beaver Tail and the Dumplings batteries were rendered unservicable."

But still another letter, author unknown, says:

"A fortification sometimes called Fort Louis in honor of the King of France, but now known as Fort Wetherell is associated with the French. It was situated on Dumplings Rock, a part of Conanicut, almost opposite the attractive Agassiz place called Castle Hill. Here a temporary earthworks was thrown up about the year 1775. Two years later a more permanent fort called Dumplings Rock was erected."

Mackenzie, in an entry of Sept. 17, 1777, writes:

"If the Rebels have any intention of making a serious attack on this Island (Island of Rhode Island), it is probable they will previously endeavor to possess themselves of Conanicut and Prudence, which would facilitate their attempt. We should use every means in our power to keep possession of Cononicut, to prevent the Rebels from fortifying themselves there, and erecting batteries to obstruct the entrance to the harbour, by which we should be much distressed, and our supplies and subsistence rendered extremely precarious, as the Island affords no other harbour, or good landing place but Newport. Batteries on the Dumplins, a part of Cononicut which forms the entrance of the harbour, would greatly annoy any vessels coming in."

From this it would seem that there was no battery at Dumplings Rock at that date, and this also seems to be the inference from the following entry of Dec. 9, 1777;

"The General being apprchensive that the Rebels will endeavor to establish themselves upon Conanicut, and in the end erect batteries there to obstruct the entrance of the harbour, (which might easily be done from that part called The Dumplins) has ordered A Detachment to take post there again, and A Detachment consisting of 1 Capt, 1 Subn, 2 Serjt, 2 Corpl, 1 Dr, and 50 men from three British Battalions, with a 3 Pr. and two Artillerry men went over there this morning. The Detachment is at present posted in the Redoubt which was made there last summer near the watering place. Capt. D'Aubant, the Commanding Engineer having been over to Conanicut to examine and fix upon the most proper situation for the Detachment, proposes to erect another Redoubt on the height which Commands a beach which forms the only communication between that part called Beaver-tail,



and the rest of the Island, which will prevent the Enemy from having access to the Dumplins, which is the only part on which they could erect batteries to have any effect on the shipping."

But his entry for July 21, 1778, reads, "The batteries at Brenton's Point, the Dumplings, Fox Hill, Goat Island, and the North Battery, have all been mounted with cannon."

With the coming of the British all American troops were withdrawn from Conanicut and the few remaining inhabitants left to make out as best they could. The British took immediate possession, as noted in Mackenzie's diary, Dec. 12, 1776:

A Detachment of a Captain and 100 men of the 54th Regiment went over to Connonicut Island this morning to take possession of it, and protect the Inhabitants.

Emerald frigate anchored between this Island and Prudence another Frigate stationed above Prudence to prevent any vessel passing between Conanicut and the Main.

Dec. 20, 1776.

The 54th Regiment passed over this morning to Connonicut Island where they are to be quartered.

This harbor is now fuller of shipping than it has been any time since our first arrival, there being near 100 sail of vessels besides 7 two decked ships (*Chatham* 50 guns, *Somerset* 64, *Raisonable* 64, *Nonsuch* 64) and several Frigates and the Strombolo Fire ship.

One can imagine the feelings of those impoverished inhabitants of Jamestown who, after seven years of oppression, had such a display of enemy power constantly before their eyes.

There were but a few left on the island. It was reported in the General Assembly that Jamestown was deserted. Actually, including some Tories, there were about 20 families left, among whom were the Carrs, Underwoods, Hulls, Weedens, Remingtons, Howlands, Batteys, Gardners and Tews. There are no town records for this period and very little information as to life on Jamestown. However there is a tradition in the Carr family regarding Nicholas Carr, who lived at the Carr Homestead on Carr's Lane, which goes as follows:

Although a Quaker and inclined toward peace, Nicholas refused to leave the island, and it was about this time that he had an encounter with a Captain of one of the British war vessels.

One day as he was plowing the north lot this captain came along and in a very insolent manner ordered him to stop his team. The command being disregarded the captain struck him a blow on the head with his cane. Nicholas immediately declared a war of his own, and they fought the war of the Revolution in miniature, with the same ending. After the captain had been soundly thrashed he cried for quarter and was allowed to go on his way. Upon reaching his ship he sent a file of soldiers ashore who seized Nicholas and carried him to the vessel, where he was held prisoner in irons for three days. Each morning he was brought on deck, a rope put around his neck, and given the choice of getting down on his knees and kissing the hand of the captain and being liberated, or being hanged from the yard arm of the vessel.

While he was thus held prisoner, William Battey, a Tory, (who supplied the British with farm produce) and a near neighbor, who lived in the Battey house on the west side of the North Road, just south of Carr's Lane, went on board and interceded for him. Finding that the fear of hanging had no effect on this staunch patriot, and because of this friendly intercession by a Tory, he was finally liberated and sent ashore.

Returning to Mackenzie's diary we find an entry of Oet. 27, 1777.

"A Detachment of a Captain and 60 men at Cononieut Island, are furnished by the troops near town."

The Renown was in the West or Narraganset passage between Connonieut and the Naraganset shore.

The Orpheus About a mile above Dyer's Island, between Prudence and Rhode Island.

"I think we should not neglect the defense of the W. side so much as we have done. The placing of the *Orpheus* in the passage between Cononicut and Prudence would prevent the enemy from making any attempt from that quarter, and would render the W. side much more secure."

Dec. 29, 1777.

The Detachment of Hessians which had been stationed on Cononicut Island during the summer, was withdrawn this day."

"Detachment of Capt. and 50 men from this Garrison, went over this morning to Cononicut, to be employed in cutting wood for the use of the troops. A transport is ordered to attend them, and is to be stationed near the Ferry. The Detachment is to lie on board her every night; and when they land in the morning are to take their arms with them."

In reference to the last paragraph, the British army burned 300 cords of wood a day. They cut down all the trees on the southern end of the Island of Rhode Island, including all the orchards, and tore down many houses in Newport, then they cut all the trees on Jamestown, and finally were compelled to get wood from Long Island.

From the beginning of serious trouble with England the Colonists had sought the help of France, Britain's perpetual enemy. Money and munitions of war had been furnished by France, but now that the colonists had declared their independence they wanted a treaty of alliance. In 1776 Benjamin Franklin was sent to Paris to negotiate with the King of France and his court. He was finally successful and, after two years, on February 6, 1778, the Treaty of Paris was signed. Five weeks later Count d'Estaing, with 12 ships of line, 4 frigates and 1000 troops set sail for America. The plan of campaign, in conjunction with the American forces, was to destroy Lord Howe's fleet which was in the Delaware River, then capture the British army at Philadelphia. But d'Estaing was delayed by storms and when he arrived at Delaware Bay found that the British had evacuated Philadelphia and Lord Howe's fleet was safe in New York harbor. Count d'Estaing, anxious to meet with the British fleet, set out for New York, but upon arrival there was told that his larger ships drew too much water to allow them to cross the bar at the entrance to the harbor. General Washington then suggested a combined attack of the French fleet and the American forces in Rhode Island under the

command of General Sullivan upon the British army at Newport. Count d'Estaing hoisted anchor and set sail for Narragansett Bay.

All this was soon known to the inhabitants of Jamestown as well as to the British army at Newport, who began frantically to strengthen their positions, as noted by Mackenzie in his diary:

July 27, 1778. "The troops stationed near Newport are hard at work in strengthening the defenses and preparing to give the French ships a proper reception. The Batteries at Brenton's point, The Dumplins, Fox Hill, Goat Island and the North battery have been mounted with Cannon &c, in the best manner the time will permit."

July 29, 1778. On the appearance of the French Fleet.

"Boats were immediately sent over to Cononicut, from whence the Two Battalions of Anspach and Brown's Regiment of Provincials were withdrawn, leaving small detachments only in the Batteries on Fox Hill and the Dumplins. The withdrawing these Battalions immediately, was certainly well judged. From the moment the French attempted to enter the harbour, it would have been impracticable, and the loss of so considerable a part of our force, would have proved disgraceful and perhaps fatal. They should never have been sent there."

July 30, 1778. "The General, judging it would answer but little purpose to risque the loss of the Detachments upon Cononicut, sent orders, as soon as the French ship had passed the Battery on Fox Hill, to withdraw them and the Guns from that Island. The Troops were brought off; but as there was not a sufficient Number of Oxen to remove the Guns, those on Fox Hill were spiked, and the 2 24prs. on the Dumplings were thrown down the Rock into the Sea. The Island was entirely Evacuated by 10 O'Clock without any interruption."

The French fleet arrived off Point Judith July 29, in foggy weather. Capt. Caleb Gardner, an old sea captain and staunch patriot saw them from his home, the Maudsley House, in Newport. Realizing the difficulties they would have in navigating the unfamiliar waters of the entrance to the bay, he rowed out to the fleet that night under cover of darkness and piloted them into the harbor the next day.

The French landed 4000 troops on Conanicut which were to be transferred to the Island of Rhode Island to augment the forces of Gen. Sullivan. The French then set out to destroy the British vessels in the harbor. Rather than have them captured by the French the British burned them all—a total of 7 frigates and a number of smaller vessels, 212 guns being rendered inactive. Now in complete command of the bay the French fleet took stations on both sides of Conanicut, commanding both the East and West Passage. A few vessels were stationed in the Sakonnet River. Gen. Sullivan feared that his forces were not sufficient to attack and asked for more time to gather men from Massachusetts and Connecticut. Thus nine precious days were lost. The night before the day decided upon for the attack (August 10) a heavy fog enveloped everything. As the fog lifted during the morning Lord Howe's fleet was seen off Point Judith. The surprise was complete. There was nothing for d'Estaing to do but prepare for battle. He spent the day and night getting his fleet in condition and the next morning set sail for the attack. As his vessels sailed through the East Passage the British forces opened fire, as described by Chaplain Cutter of the American camp. "As they passed the town and forts the ships began and kept up an incessant fire, until they were all passed through. The roar of cannon at times was such as to make but one continued sound without any distinction of guns." As the French fleet went out the British cut their cables and set out to sea. There developed a typical northeaster which continued in unabated fury for four days.

To follow the Battle of Rhode Island in detail is far beyond the scope of this writing although much of it could be seen from Jamestown and the outcome was of vital importance to the inhabitants. It was not until the 19th that Gen. Sullivan began his attack with a cannon fire lasting two days. On the 25th the French fleet returned. The storm had been so severe that the vessels of both fleets had been widely separated and there had been no decisive encounter. Lord Howe's fleet finally got to New York for repairs and d'Estaing, after stopping at Newport, continued on to Boston to repair and refit.

As we all know, the Battle of Rhode Island was unsuccessful and after nine days of fighting the Americans retreated off the island to the main land at Tiverton. The next morning, Sept. 1, Sir Henry Clinton, with a fleet of 72 ships and 4500 troops sailed into the bay, and once again the British were in supreme command of Narragansett Bay and Newport. The intensive actions of the campaign were taking place elsewhere and until the early Fall of 1779 the British were in quiet possession of Newport and the inhabitants of Jamestown were unmolested.

On October 25th, 1779, all Americans were commanded to remain in their houses, which, of course, many of them did not do. To their great surprise they saw the entire British fleet lined up off Brenton's Point. All day long the troops were transferred to the vessels and in the evening the entire fleet of 110 vessels, with all the British troops, after having occupied Newport four years and devastated all the islands in the lower bay, sailed away over the horizon into the unknown.

The departure was cause for great rejoicing, but the desolation they left behind was beyond description. There was scarcely any food or a stick of firewood. Corn sold for \$4.00 a bushel, wood \$20.00 a cord, but no one had any money. The succeeding winter was the most severe ever known and for six weeks the bay was frozen over solid, also the ocean as far as the eye could see. So impoverished were the inhabitants they had to call for assistance.

The Tories and those without the tie of property ownership had left the island for safer places. Those who still remained were farmers and all they had left was their farm and homestead. With the terrible hardships of winter over they started once again to cultivate their land, plant what crops they could and endeavor to get new livestock for their pastures. It was a gloomy outlook, but they had no alternative.

On July 11, 1780, a French fleet of 15 ships of war, 618 guns, under the command of Admiral de Ternay, with 5000 land troops under the command

of Count de Rochambeau, sailed into the harbor. The troops were landed on the Island of Rhode Island and Jamestown and work was immediately started to re-condition and re-arm all the fortifications. This friendly invasion was very welcome to the inhabitants, as it opened the prospect of a market for their produce and labor. (The French army spent 20,000 livres alone in repairing houses in Newport for quarters for their officers and men.) On July 21 an English fleet of 11 ships of war appeared off Point Judith and a few days later came the terrifying news that General Clinton with 10,000 troops, in conjunction with the English fleet, was preparing an attack on the French at Newport. After many days of feverish activity by the French troops, the English fleet sailed away and news came that the attack had been abandoned.

With the fear of attack gone the French returned to a normal camp life and a period of gay social activities began at Newport resulting in a sincere and lasting friendship between the French and the colonists. But all was not as it should have been on Jamestown, as shown by an entry in the town's records, August 19, 1780:

"It is Voted that Messrs. Benjamin Underwood, John Gardner, John Weeden, Benjamin Remington, George Tew, & John Howland be a committee and Prepare an Address to their Excellencies the Count de Rochambeau and the Chavilier de Terney commander of his most Christian fleet in the harbour of Newport. Praying that the people under his command might not be Permitted to come on shore without some Good and Known officer over them in order to Restrain them from Committing Damage or offering any injury or insult to the Good and Peaceable People of this town."

The winter passed with the inhabitants pursuing their normal activities under normal conditions, and spring again found them preparing for the summer activities.

General Washington, in preparing his summer campaign, desired a personal conference with the French commanders and staff, and on March 6, 1781, Job Watson, ever on the look-out from his watch tower on Tower Hill, reported that General Washington, with eight officers and aides as a body guard, had passed on his way to the ferry to Jamestown. The sailboat ferries were waiting for them at Old South Ferry and they landed on Jamestown about 2 o'clock. They crossed the island on Ferry Road (Narragansett Avenue) to the East Ferry where the admiral's barge was waiting to convey General Washington directly to the *Duc de Bourgoyne*. His reception is graphically told by J. A. Stevens, in the "History of Newport County":

"Here he was met by Rochambeau and the general officers of the army and fleet. On his leaving the ship a salute was fired. Landing at Barney's ferry, the corner of Long Wharf and Washington street, he was again met by the French officers and escorted to the headquarters of Rochambeau in Clarke street, receiving the same honor that would have been paid to a marshal of France or a prince of the royal blood. The route was lined with the French troops three deep on either side and in close order the entire distance. In the evening the fleet in the harbor and all the houses in the town were illuminated, the town council having voted candles to all who were unable to provide them. A procession was made through

the streets. In front walked thirty boys, each bearing a candle fixed in a staff, then Generals Washington and Rochambeau with their aids and officers, followed by a large concourse of citizens. The night was clear and calm. Passing through the principal streets the commanders returned to headquarters."

On the day of General Washington's arrival 1250 French troops were embarked on the French fleet and on the 8th he and the French commanders and staff watched the fleet of 10 ships of war, 560 guns, sail out of the bay. They then returned to headquarters where, after taking leave of the French, Washington and staff started on the return trip to their own headquarters, via Providence.

As soon as the French fleet passed Point Judith the English fleet, which had been waiting in Gardiner's Bay, Long Island Sound, set sail and anchored off the entrance to Narragansett Bay. The next day they set out in pursuit of the French fleet. The two fleets came to an encounter off Cape Henry and while the result was somewhat to the advantage of the French it was far from decisive. The French fleet returned to Newport for repairs. In the meantime word had been received from Boston that another French fleet with ammunition, supplies and more troops was on the way from France. Part of the Newport fleet, with 500 troops, sailed out of the harbor to meet them. One the 10th of June all the French land forces started on their long overland march to join the American forces who were driving the British army into an untenable position at Yorktown.

Some of the French fleet remained in the harbor and troops were stationed on Jamestown where, also, the French had a hospital. The troops had their patrols along the shores and once again it was necessary for the farmers to protest at the damage done by the troops, as is shown by the entry of June 29, 1781:

"Whereas it is represented to this meeting that the Sailors belonging to his most Christian Majestics fleet in the harbor of Newport, and those in the hospitals in this town, frequently pass through the Meadows and fields of Grain in the daytime, & in the Night Season are Patroling the town throwing their fences & Walls down by which some of the Inhabitants have received Greate Damage & more likely to insue if not speedily prevented.

It is Therefore Voted that Benjamin Underwood & John Weeden be appointed to prepare a Remonstrance petition or address to the Admiral & General of the french Troop in the Land and Sea Service in behalf of the town Praying that their Troops may be Restrained and Prevented from passing through the lands and fields of Grain, throwing their Walls and fences down or Doing Damage to the Good and Wholesome People of the town: and that Aaron Sheffield be desired to Present the address to the Admiral and General of the French Army and Navy."

On October 19, 1781, Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown, and the war was over. During these years of conflict there was a common purpose which bound the people together, and there were few indeed who, either directly or indirectly, had not taken a part in this struggle. But now each person, each family, each community began to think of its own condition. The spirit of nationalism disappeared with the British armies. The immediate struggle for a livelihood was the great concern of all. There were the few years of pros-

perous activity which always follow a great war, but these were followed by a great financial panic. Taxes were exhorbitant and general conditions so bad that thousands of farmers deserted their farms to start over again in a new locality. The great movement to "go west" had started.

But no matter what the conditions were throughout the country, Jamestown could have been no worse off than it was, for Jamestown was not only ruined, it was practically depopulated. Those who remained were farmers and their only hope for a living was to get it out of the ground. This they resolutely set out to do. Sheep provided meat and wool, spinning wheels were always humming making yarn, the hand looms wove blankets and lindsey-woolsey which was cut up and made into clothes. They also grew flax and wove their own linens. Pigs provided hams (which were smoked with corn-cobs and cured by hand) sausage, lard and mince pies; apples were cut up and dried and also made into cider; geese provided meat and feathers for feather beds. The milk house of an average farm in early winter would reveal a side or two of beef and mutton, many bags of sausage, tubs of butter and lard, bags of dried apples and a hundred or more mince pies which, with the potatoes, turnips, carrots, cabbages and the barrel of cider in the cellar, had to carry them through the winter. All the cooking was done in an open fireplace or the brick oven, and sweeping was done with turkey wings. The men spent their days cultivating the fields, raising and harvesting the crops, tending the cattle and chopping wood. The women prepared the meals, tended the house, wove cloth, knitted stockings, made clothes and found time to make samplers and do embroidery. The evenings were illuminated by candles dipped or moulded of mutton fat.

The farm seemed to provide everything except boots and shoes. The itinerant shoe maker made his yearly visits and stayed at the house while making the shoes. The following bill covering one such visit is worthy of preservation:

To making your boots	\$2.00
To soling Mary	.34
To making your youngest	
To mending black girl	.16
To mending your son	.21
To mending your wife	.06

Such was the life of the average Jamestown farmer for the next three generations. They had no illusions. They were sufficient unto themselves, raised their families and provided for them out of the land they cultivated.

The next national activity that affected the lives of the inhabitants was the period of the Civil war. The Third Rhode Island Cavalry was stationed on the island at Camp Mead, and a company of colored heavy artillery was encamped on Dutch Island at Fort Casey. There were 39 men from Jamestown enrolled in the militia and G. A. Clarke, Allen Gardiner and pro-



CONANICUT PARK HOTEL



WAITING ROOM AT CONANICUT PARK WHARF

bably some others, served actively through most of the war. The army erected several barracks for the accommodation of the troops, also a building for a hospital. After the war was over the hospital was rebuilt for a town hall and one of the barracks was purchased by A. Crawford Greene of Providence, who remodeled it and used it for a summer home.

As far as is known this was the first building to be built exclusively for a summer home and thus in this humble way did Jamestown get its start on the way to becoming a summer resort. Not long afterwards Joseph Wharton, of a wealthy Philadelphia Quaker family, crossed the island on his way to



AERIAL VIEW OF JAMESTOWN — 1935

Newport and became so enamored with its beauties that he soon erected his beautiful summer home "Horsehead" at the Dumplings, overlooking the ocean and the entrance to the bay. Soon other Quaker families from Philadelphia built their homes and in a few years many large and beautiful homes had been built on the Dumplings and around Mackerel Cove. Shoreby Hill, just north of the village, was developed by people from St. Louis and all along the east shore were homes of people from many inland cities. Jamestown had developed a permanent summer population.

In 1822 the town's tax list gave an assessed valuation of \$164,503., sixty-four years later, 1886, it had increased to \$1,028,280, but not until 1877 did the population reach that of 1775.

In 1872 L. W. Davis, Gov. Henry Lippitt, John Kendrick, Leonard Whitney and others organized a company which purchased 500 acres at the north end of the island which they called "Conanicut Park." A substantial wharf was built and the Providence-Newport boat stopped there morning and evening. It was a delightful sail up and down the bay and many Providence people bought land and built summer homes. There was a hotel and general store and a successful summer community was developed and con-

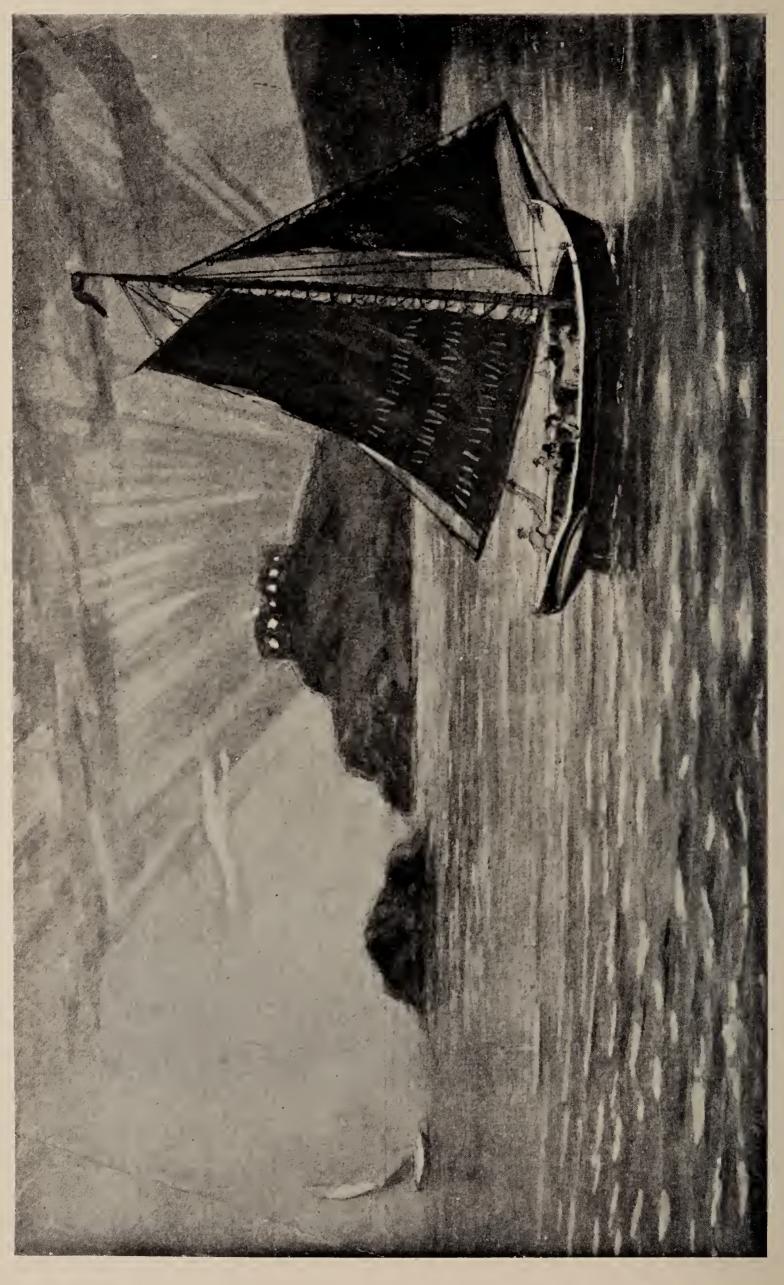
tinued for many years. After a period of inactivity due to the discontinuance of the Newport boat, active interest in the "Park" is again seen. Many of the cottages are now occupied, the Point View Hotel is full to capacity every summer and the Y. W. C. A. Sea Side Camp for girls is a scene of happy gatherings and reunions. On August 2, 1940, the Jamestown Bridge, 6982 feet long, 135 feet high over the channel, connecting the island with the main land to the west, was officially opened. In 1946 a land development project was started at "Jamestown Shores", located on the west side of the island and extending several miles north from the east end of the bridge. It has its own bathing beach, roads have been laid out and many cottages have already been built.

Jamestown today has an assessed valuation of \$5,600,000 with a year round population of 3200, which is augmented every summer by a large number of summer residents, most of whom have their own homes and estates and return year after year. Everything needful for enjoyable living can be obtained at the markets, drug stores, hardware stores, beauty parlors, garages and ship yard; there is a golf club, yacht club, movie theatre, and at Beaver Tail some of the finest fishing along the Atlantic coast.



Gardner Caswell Bay V House Block Hot JAMESTOWN WATER FRONT — 1898 THORNDIKE HOTEL

45



## Growth of Jamestown.

## THE JAMESTOWN FERRIES

RODE ISLAND, the smallest state in the Union, extends  $47\frac{1}{2}$  miles from North to South, and is 40 miles wide. Extending north from the Atlantic Ocean a distance of 28 miles, dividing the state into two unequal parts is Narragansett Bay, and to make this division more complete is the Providence River, which runs through the center of the city of Providence and joins the bay at Gaspee Point. In a state so divided by a body of water a mile to 12 miles wide, is it any wonder that ferries have played such an important part in its history and development?

Dr. and Mrs. Charles V. Chapin, in their "History of Rhode Island Ferries," covering the years 1640 to 1923, give a list of 74 ferries within the boundaries of the state and 25, or ½ of these, had a landing on Jamestown. That there should have been so many ferries at Jamestown is evident, as here was, and still is, the only crossing of Narragansett Bay south of Providence. In the horse and buggy days it was several days' drive from Saunderstown to Newport, over bad roads. It is not surprising that the Jamestown Ferries predominate in ferry history.

The ferry between Jamestown and Newport is probably the oldest ferry in the United States, and has been in almost continuous operation for 275 years, and in all those years the descendants of Governor Caleb Carr, who established the first ferry about 1675, either owned the sailboat ferry or were officers in the succeeding steam ferry. Caleb Carr was one of the original purchasers of the island from the Indians in 1657 and while he never lived on the island, his eldest son Nicholas soon took up his residence there, as did many others. The need of some dependable means of transportation must have soon become necessary. In the Rhode Island Colonial Records, January 30, 1670, we find the following record, "There is allowed unto Caleb Carr, for several services done by him and his boat to this day, four pounds." Captain Church states that at the time of the Great Swamp fight he crossed "the ferries" on his way from Bristol to Warwick, and there seems to be little doubt that he referred to the ferries at Jamestown. So it is evident that sometime between 1657, when the island was purchased, and 1675, when Captain Church used them, such a ferry or ferries were established.

The first record of a license for this ferry is May, 1700, to John Carr, but the Rhode Island Colonial Records are missing from August 1692 to July 1695. Caleb Carr was elected governor of the colony in 1695. The ferry estate passed in direct line from Caleb¹ to John² to Samuel³ to Samuel⁴ to Samuel⁵ up to 1873. In that year the Jamestown and Newport Ferry Company was organized by George C. Carr and Frederick N. Cottrell. Geo. C. Carr was president 1873-1902, Thomas G. Carr was president 1902-1908, and his son, George C. Carr, was treasurer, except for one year, from 1913 to the time of his death in 1945. Except for a period of 9 years, a descendant of Caleb Carr either owned the ferry or was an officer in the ferry company from 1675 to 1945—a period of 270 years.

To-day any ferry crossing is timed to the minute and operated on a definite schedule; the boats are commodious and have all conveniences. But at the time the first ferry to Jamestown was started it was a far different story. The ferries then were sailboats with a sloop rig, mainsail and jib, 35 to 40 feet long with a wide beam and heavy planking. The passengers sat in the open cockpit at the stern. Forward of the mast was another cockpit for horses and cattle and between these two was a little covered cabin for the passengers during rough weather. The boats were cumbersome and too heavy to row. If caught in a flat calm the passengers just sat there and wondered when they would get to shore, and if the weather was rough they got drenched and wondered why they ever left shore. A trip across the ferry was full of uncertainties. A ferry leaving Newport one early afternoon was caught in a falling breeze and an outgoing tide and was carried out through the east passage beyond Beaver Tail and did not make Jamestown until late the next morning. Dr. MacSparran, in his diary, gives thanks at having just caught the ferry as, soon after making the landing, a storm broke and the ferry did not run for two days. Many accounts of such experiences have been found in old letters and records.

In following the development of the ferries, we must remember that up to the Revolutionary War, Newport was the most important shipping point on the coast, excelling Boston and New York in shipping activity. Then again, very shortly after Newport was established, settlers went over into the Narragansett country. Here they took up large tracts of land and their farms were estimated, not in acres, but in square miles and were spoken of as plantations. They were wealthy and their plantations were operated by slaves. A mode of life was established much resembling that of the South before the Civil War and the atmosphere of that old aristocracy still seems to linger over all of old South County. With these two points in mind we can readily understand the importance of the ferries across lower Narragansett Bay to Jamestown and Newport.

The ferry that Caleb Carr established was probably at first just a boat for his own personal needs which gradually was used by others and so developed into a regular ferry. Such a boat could make at best but one or two round trips a day and its first trip would start from Newport. This was a hardship on the people of Jamestown as it meant that they would not get away from the island until late in the morning. Naturally they wanted a boat

to start from Jamestown early in the morning, for the trip would take the best part of a day and, being farmers, they wanted to get back in time to do the chores before it got dark.

To meet this demand, a license was issued in 1700 to Thomas Winterton, of Jamestown, to operate a ferry from Jamestown to Newport. There is little doubt, however, that the ferry had been in operation several years before that date. Now we have two boats on the same ferry, landing at the same docks but owned by different people. Such a boat was called a "mate" boat, and the two boats were supposed to leave their respective docks at about the same time. But human nature was the same then as it is to-day and ferrymen were no different from the rest of mankind. What a ferryman was supposed to do and what he did were often as far apart as the poles and throughout the whole history of the ferries we find charges and counter charges of broken agreements and unfair competition.

The ferries in the colony from almost the beginning were regulated by the Colonial Government, not only by licenses but by rules for operation, and the Jamestown ferries were no exception. In 1699 the Colonial Assembly ordered "that ferrymen between said Newport, said Jamestown and Kingstown and all other ferries in said Colony shall carry all Magistrates, Deputies, Jurymen, and all persons on his Majesty's service ferriage free."

In 1700 the Colonial Government (Rhode Island Colonial Records, Vol. 3 p 405) voted "Whereas Mr. Josiah Arnold, of Conanicut, alias Jamestown, presented a petition, dated the 25th of March, 1700, that a Horse Ferry between said Jamestown and Narragansett shore might be settled on him for some years, he being willing to provide suitable accommodations, and suitable boats for good transportation to attend said ferries. Voted that the said ferry be settled on Josiah Arnold for seven years." There is no record, however, that such a horse ferry was ever put in operation.

With the necessity of getting to Newport to dispose of their produce it can be assumed that, in spite of the regular ferries, most of the farmers had their own sailboats and would accommodate their neighbors by taking them "to town" when they went. This led to serious trouble with the licensed ferrymen and the dispute finally went to the Colonial Government which voted, 1702, (Rhode Island Colonial Records Vol. 3 p 454)

"that the free inhabitants of Jamestown shall have the liberty at all times to transport themselves and neighbors with their goods or clothes in their own boats: provided they transport not any for money, whereby the stated ferries may be damnified, except there be great occasion or necessity when the ferry boats are out of the way or cannot be had."

The Winterton ferry passed through many hands and we find it owned by Jonathan March, Robert Barker, Samuel Clarke, John Remington and many others down to 1833 when Caleb F. Weaver purchased it for \$7,000, combining it with the Ellery Ferry and the Hull Ferry. It was generally known as Clarke's Ferry.

It was not long after the first ferry was established between Newport and Jamestown that there was the necessity for an established ferry between Narragansett and Jamestown. In 1692 John and Jeremiah Smith, then of Prudence, purchased something over a square mile of land extending from Narragansett Bay to Pettaquamscutt River. In 1695 they divided the property and the dividing line was the road leading from the old South Ferry landing up the hill past the old South Church, across Pettaquamscutt River, up MacSparran Hill and on to the west over Indian trails into Connecticut. Part of this road is now route 138. At the time of purchase the land was occupied by James Sweet and it is very probable that he ferried people to Jamestown although there is no record of such a ferry having been licensed. The first license was issued in 1709. Down through the years, this ferry was the most important of those in the West Passage and continued in almost uninterrupted operation until 1874. In 1886 the new Steamer Conanicut replaced the Steamer Jamestown on the Newport side and the Jamestown started trips across the West Passage to Narragansett, landing at South Ferry. Like most of the ferries it had many owners and was known at various times as Smith's Ferry, Narragansett Ferry, West Ferry, Franklin's Ferry, Cottrell's Ferry and Eaton's Ferry. Most often it was referred to as South Ferry, no matter who owned it. It also seems that every time it changed hands a law suit was involved, one of which was carried to the Supreme Court, the decision being written by Chief Justice Marshall. It became quite a famous institution and reached the height of its popularity under Abel Franklin.

The popularity of a ferry was determined not so much by the ferry itself as by the ferry house connected with it. The natural outgrowth of operating a ferry was the provision of a place of entertainment for belated and storm bound travellers. This often times developed into a greater source of revenue than the ferry itself and was also the cause for many complaints—as, when for one reason or another, the ferryman refused to make the trip across, thus compelling the traveler to spend the night at his tavern. Shepherd Tom Hazard tells of such an incident where the traveler refused to pay what he called an exorbitant price for a night's lodging and drove two miles back into the country where he secured accommodation for half the price. Such, however, was not the treatment given at South Ferry, for its fame was great and travelers looked forward to spending the night at the Ferry House and later at the new Narragansett House.

In 1700 we find a license issued to Jonas Arnold of Jamestown for a ferry in the opposite direction, that is from Jamestown to South Kingstown. Jonas Arnold was the son of Benedict Arnold, one of the original purchasers of the island, whose holdings comprised all the land from the Town Beach to Beaver Tail. Jonas probably lived on the Beaver Head farm but it seems doubtful if he operated the ferry from there as the landing for the other ferry was a mile north of that point. Almost without exception the Jamestown landings for the West and South ferries have been at the west end of Ferry Road, now Narragansett Avenue. This ferry was not so profitable as the



FERRYMAN'S HOUSE

Courtesy of R. I. Historical Society

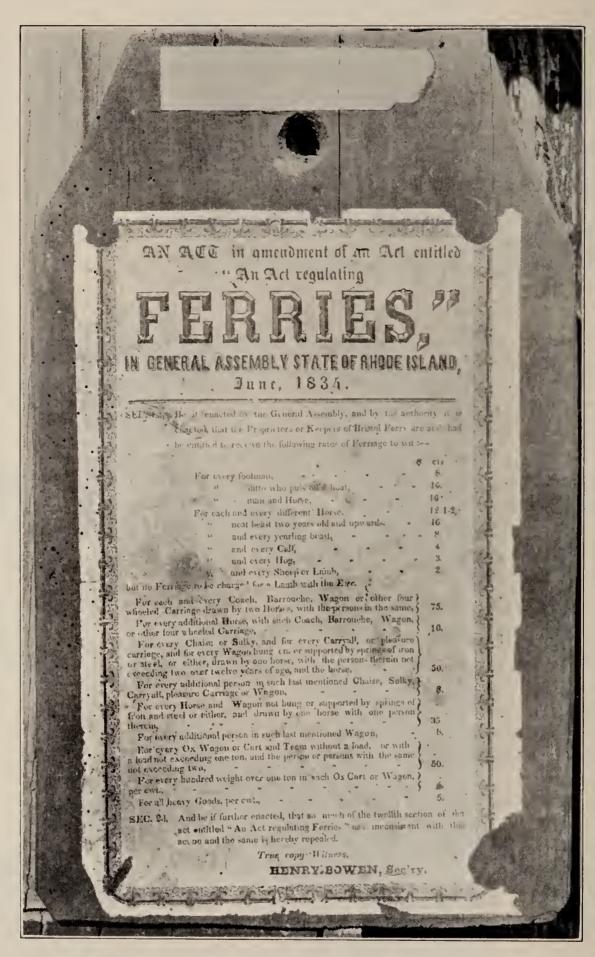
TAGGERT'S FERRY HOUSE (West Ferry)

Courtesy of R. I. Historical Society

BRIGG'S FERRY HOUSE (West Ferry)

Courtesy of R. I. Historical Society





RATES OF FERRIAGE — 1834

Courtesy of R. I. Historical Society

one from Narragansett, as, when going to Newport, in addition to the passengers, there was freight and livestock. This was so heavy that for a long period of years a freight boat was operated as well as the passenger ferry. But on the return trip there would be only passengers, all the freight having been disposed of in Newport.

In 1748, the service in the west bay was so unsatisfactory the Colonial Government attempted to operate the ferry. This was not successful and two years later the one to South Ferry was sold to Abel Franklin, who operated the ferry in the opposite direction, and the other, known as the North Ferry, was sold to Stephen Wilcox. This soon ceased operation leaving Abel Franklin in control of all ferries in the west passage. During the occupancy of Newport by the British during the Revolutionary War this, as well as all ferries, was practically suspended. After the war, Mrs. Franklin resumed operations. The ferry changed hands many times in the following years, the last owner being Isaac Bowen Briggs who, however, gave it up some fifteen years before the steam ferry started in 1886.

In the meantime ferries had continued to multiply from Jamestown to Newport and in the opposite direction. For many years there was more freight going to Newport from Narragansett than from Jamestown, but during the Revolutionary War the shipping industry of Newport was ruined, never to be regained, and the Narragansett farmers had to seek other shipping points. The people of Jamestown, however, were small farmers in comparison to those of Narragansett, and had always found Newport a sufficient market. So while the ferries in the West Passage gradually declined, those from Jamestown to Newport prospered.

In 1725 a ferry was licensed to run to Jamestown from Easton's Point, Newport, just north of the present Long Wharf and became known as the Point Ferry. It remained in the family of Benjamin Ellery for several generations. In 1799 Christopher Grant Champlin sold it to Freeman Mayberry for \$27,000.

Mention of Long Wharf appears in the records as early as 1685. A lease was granted in 1745 for a ferry to Jamestown from this point but there is no evidence that it ever operated. In 1755 a grant for thirty years was made to Thomas Hazard. Griffen Barney was boatman and all evidence points to the fact that this ferry was used by General Washington when he visited Newport in 1781. It was discontinued soon after.

The ferries from Jamestown also increased in numbers. In 1756 a license was granted to Capt. John Hull. His Jamestown landing was about where the water fence now is at the north boundary of Shoreby Park. It was not operated after the Revolutionary War.

In 1747, after several unsuccessful applications, a ferry license was granted to David Greene. The Jamestown landing was at the old stone wharf which is now the north side of the yacht basin. The ferry house was where the Bay View Hotel now stands. It was sold to William Martin in

1752 whose tavern achieved quite a reputation. It continued operation until the steam ferry was organized.

There were two ferries which have not been mentioned because of their location. Ebenezer Slocomb lived on a farm at the west end of the North Ferry Road. His house was near the shore on the north side of the road. In 1707 it was voted that he have the privilege of keeping a ferry from the west side of Conanicut to North Kingstown. The North Kingstown landing was at Plum Beach at a place called Daniel's Landing—just south of the abutment of the Jamestown bridge. The mate boat, known as Northrup's Ferry, was licensed in 1727. The Northrup Ferry operated up to the Revolutionary War. It is not known how long Slocum operated his ferry, generally called North Ferry, and, outside the fact that a license was granted, there is nothing much but a persistent tradition that it ever did operate. However, in the town's records he is spoken of as operating a ferry, and was granted a license to "keep a house of entertainment" for several years.

Running directly east from the landing to the east shore of the island was a road, now called Eldred Avenue, but on all the old maps, designated as North Ferry Road. At the east end of the road there still remains an old stone wharf—now referred to as Howland's Wharf. Years ago, in the south western part of Coddington's Cove in Newport, was the remains of a stone wharf which tradition points to as the landing of a ferry from the east end of North Ferry Road in Jamestown. It seems strange that tradition should be so strong that these two ferries did really operate while actual evidence is so lacking.

People on the island avoided taking a ferry in bad weather, but those from inland points were naturally anxious to get to their destination and sailed when it would have been wiser to have stayed on shore. The Prince de Broglie writes of such an experience on a trip to Newport in 1780, as follows:

"It was another long days journey from New London to Newport over fifty miles of very bad roades. There were also two ferries to be crossed. The first one presented no great difficulties but the second called Conanicut Ferry which separates the island of Newport from the mainland was at least a league in width and is not always safe. Besides it was after dark when we reached it. The getting of our horses on board of the ferry boat and the anxiety of some of us at the frequent rolling of the boat were not at all amusing especially in the darkness which surrounded us. We passed about an hour in this uncomfortable situation and the boatman finished by running us aground about two hundred yards from the landing place. As the water was only two feet deep we all walked ashore and it was in this way that we made our entrance into the charming town of Newport."

Up to this time all ferrying to and from the island was by means of sail-boats, but in June, 1829, Thomas B. Congdon, who had previously purchased the "Ellery Conanicut Ferry" from Joseph Allen, sold a portion of his wharf to the Narragansett Bay Company, which was to operate a horse ferry like the one then in use between Bristol and Portsmouth. A letter written by Thomas B. Gould dated 21st of 6th mo. 1829, tells of his trip to Conanicut:

"We went over with A. and G. Jones in the horse-boat. The wind being against us made hard work for the horses, and it was nearly eleven when we arrived on shore."

However, the return trip to Newport was more exciting. He wrote as follows:

"The wind blew so heavy, it was thought improbable the horse-boat would come over, and Ann Jones not being well, she thought most proper to leave at four o'clock, and the wind continuing to blow very heavy, the spray broke over into the boat to such a degree that it wet our friends very much, although they had umbrellas and cloaks. I crawled under the cuddy, where I should have been dry, if the water had not dripped through the planks. However, I esteem it another merciful favor that we were preserved from any other damage than wetting our clothes. Elizabeth thought it might be a specimen of crossing the Atlantic, but Ann told her it was not a comparison to it. Ann remarked, while on board the horse-boat, that it reminded her of a saying in her country, of putting to sea in a post-chaise."

Possibly it should be explained that a horse ferry was a boat with paddle wheels on each side connected by a shaft which was geared up to a tread mill. A pair of horses were on the tread mill and as they walked on this endless belt arrangement the paddle wheels were set in motion.

The Jamestown horse-ferry lasted but one year, when the wharf property was re-conveyed to Congdon. His ferry property had been sold to Caleb F. Weaver. This property Weaver's widow sold to Philip Caswell, Jr., in March, 1860, who, in turn sold it to William H. Knowles on March 25,



STEAMER JAMESTOWN AND LESTER EATON'S SIGNAL HOUSE



Old Pier & Kerry Boat ... Jamestown.



New Pier & Ferry Boat, Jamestown.

BAY VIEW HOTEL Ferry House NED CARR'S

WM. H. KNOWLES' HOUSE

STEAMER
JAMESTOWN
Courtesy of R. I. Historical Society



STEAMER JAMESTOWN



WEST FERRY DOCK AND STEAMER WEST SIDE Courtesy of R. I. Historical Society

1871. The ferry was operated with Capt. Job Ellis as boatman. Samuel Carr was still running the ferry from Newport to Jamestown with Job Caswell as boatman.

On the west side there was no freight or livestock to transport and passengers were few. The old sail-boat ferry was unfit for use and the ferry was discontinued. For the next fourteen years Capt. Lester Eaton, then Pilot Commissioner, continued the service with a catboat, carrying the mail

four times a week. He kept his boat at Saunderstown, where he lived, and, except for the mail trips, made a trip only when he had a passenger. If someone in Jamestown wanted to cross over to Saunderstown he would open up a large door or shutter on the west side of the ferry house. The house was painted white and the inside of the door was painted black. Capt. Eaton would come over as soon as he saw the signal.

In 1854 a charter was granted to the Narragansett, Conanicut and Newport Steam Ferry Co. to operate a steam ferry between Narragansett and Jamestown, and Jamestown and Newport, replacing the sail ferries. That was as far as the venture went and nothing more was ever heard of it.

The people of Jamestown had long realized that the sail ferry was inadequate and finally, in 1872, the Jamestown & Newport Ferry Company was organized by the people of the town. They also realized the vital importance of the ferry to the town and that the town should be in control of the company for the town's protection. At a Town Meeting they voted to subscribe to 60% of the company's stock but not over \$12,000, to be paid when the remaining 40% had been subscribed and paid for. The 40% was taken up by Jamestown residents and the control of the company rested in the town. In 1924-5, during the 23 year period (1923-1946) when Chas. H. Brooks was General Manager and at the instigation of Samuel Smith, Jr., the town purchased all the outstanding stock of the ferry company.

With finances assured the new company arranged with the Atlantic Works of East Boston to build the ferry boat. A new wharf was built in Jamestown, just south of the sailboat ferry wharf, and in Newport a new wharf was built at the foot of Mill Street where the Carr Ferry had always landed since it made its first trip about 1675.

The Steamer Jamestown, 80 feet long, 22 feet wide and 8 foot draft, Capt. Stephen C. Gardner in command, made her first trip in July 1873, and started on a schedule of five round trips a day. In 1886, to meet the demand for a larger boat, the Steamer Conanicut, 125 feet long, was purchased and the Jamestown was put on the West Ferry run to South Kingstown. In 1896 a new steamer, the Beaver Tail, was put on the West Ferry run, and the Jamestown was sold. For several years these two boats comprised the fleet of the Jamestown & Newport Ferry Co.

Demands on these boats were heavy during the summer months, when traffic was at its peak. Mr. Stillman Saunders, of Saunderstown, an experienced boat builder, knew of these conditions and saw an opportunity to make his knowledge profitable. At his boat yard, just north of the ferry landing at Saunderstown he built a ferry boat. It was launched in 1902, christened the J. A. Saunders and put on the run to Jamestown in competition with the Beaver Tail. Evidently he thought the venture was profitable for he soon started building another boat, the Narragansett, which was completed in 1905 and put on the run from Jamestown to Newport in competition with the Conanicut. He then started still another boat, the Newport, 150 feet over all, which was completed in 1907 and replaced the Narragansett, which



ELLERY FERRY HOUSE (East Ferry)

Courtesy of R. I. Historical Society

was put on the West Ferry. The J. A. Saunders was used on a run from Saunderstown to Fort Greble on a government contract.

The steamer *Newport* still holds the record for making the fastest run to Newport—11 minutes from dock to dock. The rivalry between the competing boats was intense and charges and counter charges of unfair competition and sharp practices were of almost daily occurrence. In 1910, however, after 8 years of this ferry war, which had divided the town into two almost bitter factions, Saunders gave up the contest and put his boats to use elsewhere.

With the withdrawal of the Saunders boats and the increase in traffic, the Beaver Tail was unable to give satisfactory service and in 1923 the Huguenot was purchased and put on the West Ferry run with the Beaver Tail. Still the boats were unable to keep up with the increase in summer traffic and in February 1927 the Steamer Governor Carr was launched at the Fore River Ship yards and went on the East Ferry run that summer. The launching of the new boat was a gala day for Jamestowners and a large delegation went to the ship yard to see Miss Lucy Carr (Jenkins) christen the boat Governor Carr, so named in honor of Governor Caleb Carr, founder of the first ferry, and of whom she is a direct descendant. There was now a great

demand for an equally large boat in the West Passage and in 1930 the Steamer *Hammonton* was added to the fleet. The *Governor Carr* and *Hammonton* are both 40 car capacity.

The September gale of 1938 was most disastrous to the Ferry Company. The Beaver Tail was washed ashore, a total wreck. The Governor Carr also was swept high on the front lawn of the Richard D. Knight summer residence. She was later relaunched, repaired and was soon making her regular trips to Newport none the worse for the terrible experiences of the storm. As larger boats were added to the fleet the smaller ones were sold. The fleet now consists of the Governor Carr and the Hammonton.

On August 2, 1940, the Jamestown Bridge was officially opened, and the romance of the centuries old ferries in the West Bay came to an end. The cost of the bridge was \$2,900,000. \$1,414,000 was an outright grant of the federal government, the balance being privately financed. It is 6982 feet long and extends from the Narragansett shore to the west end of Eldred Avenue at the place where the old North Sailboat Ferry landed. There is now considerable activity in favor of another bridge connecting Jamestown and Newport.





#### BEAVER TAIL WATCH HOUSE AND LIGHTHOUSE

Beaver Tail is the southern point of Conanicut Island which separates the entrance to Narragansett Bay into the East and West Passages. Today there are lights at Point Judith, Whale Rock and Dutch Island in the West Passage and Brenton's Reef Lightship, Castle Hill and Rose Island in the East Passage, with Beaver Tail Light at the point of separation of the two entrances to the bay. Thus the importance of Beaver Tail light to vessels entering the harbor will be seen. It is conceivable that the early settlers recognized this fact for in the Proprietors' Records for the second month (April) 1705, is the following entry: "Ordered and made by the authority of this present Councill that there shall be a chimney built to the Watch house at the discretion of Capt. Stephen Remington." From this it is evident that the Watch house had been built some time previous, and the following entries show that it was used.

At a Meeting of the Town Counsell of Jamestown this 9th day of June 1712 called by the Governors order to sett a watch and build a Beacon. It is ordered that John Hull Grant a warrant to Gershom Remington to warn the Indians to build a beacon as soon as possible / It is further ordered that John Hull Grant forth a warrant to Benedict Arnold to look after the Watch and see that it be faithfully kept and if any Parson or Parsons should neglect his duty you are hereby ordered to make complaint unto the wardens that they may be delt with all. It is further ordered that any that shall neglect his watching or warning shall pay three shillings for his defect by distraint or otherwise. It is ordered that Gersham Remington warn the Indian men to build a beacon at beaver Taile and to come to John Hulls house for his directions, wheare and how to make it Viz. Dick, Isaac, Peter, Anthony, Daniell, Tobe, Davide, Stetienson, upon the forfeiture of three shillings each man that is Defective. It is further ordered that the Clarke draw a list and draw the order the watch to observe, and the Clark to sign the order in behalf of the Counsell.

#### Proprietors Records, May 20, 1740

"Voted and ordered that Abel Franklin build a beken att bever tail pint and paid out of the Town Treasurer.

Voted and ordered that John Wilson is apointed to finish the chembley in the watch house att bever tail and paid out of the town treasurer.

#### May 17, 1741

Voted and ordred yt town treasurer to pay Abel Franklin for a yard and a gate.

## Town Council, Jone 16, 1744

Voted and resolved that Thomas Carr procure a good Stock Lock and Key for the Watch House on bever tail Point & put the same well on upon the south door and mend said door & prepare a good Bolt for the North Door to Bolt on the inside and also that the sd Thomas Carr provide a good and suitable Gun or small arm for the use of the town & to reposite the same in the said Watch House and to be paid out of the Town Treasury."

At this time England was at war with France (Queen Ann's War) and any vessel of the enemy was legal prey. Commissions for privateering were granted to Rhode Island vessels and many prizes were brought into Narragansett Bay. Newport became the principal port for these operations

and it is conceivable that the beacon and watch house at Beavertail could have been used as an aid to navigation as well as a watch house for an approaching enemy. This possibility, however, is not recognized by the division of the U. S. Coast Guard, in charge of lighthouses.

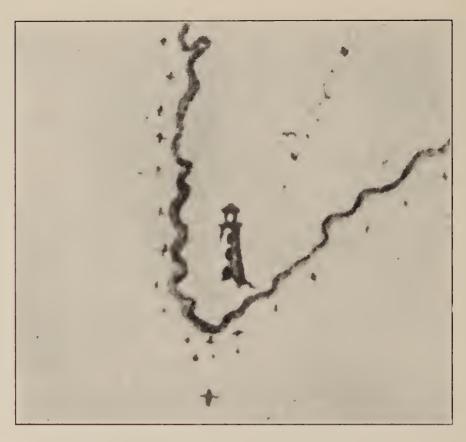
In August, 1738, a "bank" for raising money was issued by the colony. One reason for the issue was, "and whereas there is a necessity of building a Light house at Beavertail, which will be of singular service for vessels coming into the harbour in the night season, and prevent great damage which is occasioned for the want thereof." The erection of the lighthouse was authorized but work was not started because of war breaking out between England and Spain. In 1749 the General Assembly appointed a committee with an authorization to build the lighthouse, and this is the date recognized by the U. S. Coast Guard Lighthouse Department; making Beavertail Light the third to be erected on the Atlantic Coast. (The first having been erected in 1715-16 on Little Brewster Island at the entrance to Boston Harbor and the second on Brant's Point, Nantucket, in 1746.)

Mr. Joseph Harrison served on the committee to superintend the erection of the lighthouse which was designed by Peter Harrison, architect of the Redwood Library, Newport, and accepted as America's first architect. The lighthouse was described by Dr. William Douglas as follows "Diameter at Base is 24 feet and at the Top 13 Feet. The height from the Ground to the Top of the Cornice is 58 Feet, round which is a Gallery, and within that stands the Lanthorn, which is about 11 Feet High, and 8 Feet in Diameter."

Unfortunately the construction was of timber and on July 23, 1753 only three days after the General Assembly had paid Joseph and Peter Harrison's bill of £329-7s-4p for paint the structure burned to the ground. Mr. Franklin, the first light keeper continued his duties at night with an ordinary lantern until a new lighthouse, authorized at the August session of the General Assembly, was built. This new lighthouse, designed by Peter Harrison and constructed by William Reed, was built of stone and brick taken from Fort George on Goat Island.

A report (June, 1754) of the committee in charge states "We do adjudge that 2 acres of land will be necessary: that is to begin at the Point and to extend so far northward as to make two acres . . . . and do also give it as our opinion, that there ought to be a way left on the east side of said land, to extend from the North part of said land down to the Point, between where the lighthouse is intended to be built and the dwelling house, for all people to pass and re-pass." Thus the road to the Point was established and it has been maintained for the benefit of the people to this day.

The land upon which the lighthouse was erected was part of that chosen by Benedict Arnold as his share of the original purchase of the island. Evidently a controversy arose over the purchase of the two acres recommended by the committee, for Josiah Arnold, son of Benedict and owner of the land at that time, was summoned before the General Assembly "to render a reason, if he have any, why two acres of land, adjoining the lighthouse at



SKETCH OF BEAVER TAIL ABOUT 1755

Courtesy of R. I. Historical Society

Beavertail, is not set off for the use of the Colony." Again in May, 1755, it was voted by the General Assembly that "Col. Godfrey Malbone, with Messrs Thomas Wickham, Evan Malbone be appointed a committee to treat with Josiah Arnold Esq. about the land at Beavertail upon which the lighthouse stands in order to purchase the same from him for the use of said light; that when they shall have agreed, they take a deed from him unto the Colony, and draw money out of the general treasury, to pay for what they purchase; and when the said Josiah Arnold hath made and executed such a deed, that they move him to take upon himself the care and charge of said lighthouse; but if he will not sell and give a deed to the Colony, that the committee engage one of the best attorneys in the Colony to defend, at the Colony's expense, against the said Josiah Arnold, in the suit he hath commenced; and that the said committee take care of the lighthouse until the end of the General Assembly's next session." This controversy went on for many years and was never satisfactorily settled. In June, 1784, an act was passed "empowering the Indendants of Trade in this state to collect monies for the support of the lights in Light-house at Beaver Tail."

The lighthouse was partially destroyed by the British in 1779, when they evacuated Newport, but was repaired and continued in service until 1854, when a new lighthouse was built. In a report dated November, 1838, the old lighthouse was described as "being 98 feet above the level of the sea, and its limit of visibility 15¾ miles. The rubble stone tower was 68 feet high ascended by an interior spiral stairway of wood with landings at convenient places. The oil was stored under the lower landing.



BEAVER TAIL LIGHTHOUSE, 1798

Courtesy of R. I. Historical Society

There were 15 lamps, with reflectors, arranged around two circular copper tables, each 3 feet in diameter, the lower table supporting 8 lamps, which illuminated every point of the horizon and the upper table seven lamps, the vacant space being towards the land. The original dwelling, built at the same time as the tower, being too near the water and on bad foundation, was destroyed in September 1815. The dwelling in existence at that time (1838) had been erected in 1816, the walls of rough stone being "badly laid."

In 1789 the newly formed government of the United States accepted cession of the title to, and jurisdiction over, the lighthouses on the coast. Beavertail was one of twelve so taken over. On October 12, 1790, President George Washington wrote Alexander Hamilton, Secretary of the Treasury;

"I have received your letter of the 5th instant—The public service requiring the arrangements, which you have made, relative to the Light Houses Newport (Beavertail) and Portland, they are perfectly agreeable to me and receive my approbation."

However it was not until May, 1793, that the General Assembly resolved to transfer the lighthouse to the U. S. Government "provided, nevertheless, and be it further enacted, by the authority aforesaid, that if the United States shall at any time hereafter neglect to keep it lighted and in repair, the lighthouse aforesaid, that then the grant of said lighthouse shall be void and of no effect." Incidentally, the salary of the first light-keeper was \$160. a year.

In 1851 another report states that Mrs. Damaris H. Wheaton was keeper of the light, having taken over upon the death of her husband, who had been appointed light keeper in 1844. Buildings reported in bad repair "worst built tower yet seen, built of soft shale; not been repaired in seven years."

On August 3, 1854, Congress appropriated \$14,500 for a new lighthouse, illuminating apparatus and a fog signal. The new structures were erected 1855-57. The lighthouse proper was erected farther back from the shore embankment and the new fog signal house was erected approximately on the foundation of the old lighthouse. The light was equipped with a lens apparatus of the third order by Fresnel and the signal house with a Daboll horn fog signal, operated by an Ericsson hot-air engine which, in cold weather, took 60 minutes to start the fog signal. In 1873 the fog signal was in operation 493 hours and in 1875, 623 hours. New and improved equipment replaced the old from time to time as it became available.

Evidently the controversy with Josiah Arnold was not settled to the satisfaction of the government, for in 1889 Congress appropriated \$3,500 for the purchase of land for the fog signal buildings. Legal expenses \$323 and \$177 were returned to the treasury.

The hurricane of 1938 entirely destroyed and washed away the fog signal house, better known as the "whistle house", and left exposed the foundation of the old lighthouse, the location of which had been forgotten even by the oldest inhabitants. A new and completely modern siren was in operation the next Spring. On the foundation of the old lighthouse the Jamestown Historical Society has placed a placque reading as follows:

Foundation of the original
Beavertail Lighthouse
erected in 1749
Third Lighthouse to
be established on
the Atlantic Coast.



BEAVER TAIL LIGHT AND WHISTLE HOUSE

#### THE WINDMILL

Indian corn or maize is of American origin and was not known in the old world until the discovery of the new. It was the first gift of the Indians to the white man and immediately became their chief article of food. To be used for human consumption it has to be ground into a fine meal. This the Indians did by pounding the kernels of corn with a stone or pestle in a hollowed out stone.

But the inventive genius of the white man early developed the water mill and later the wind mill, the one in Newport being built in 1663. It was a long journey from Jamestown to Newport and the building of a mill on the island must have been an early consideration, but when or where the first mill was built is still unknown. On North Ferry Road, on a high hill, stands an old house the front door step of which is an old mill stone, and it is probable that the first mill was in that immediate vicinity. However, the first record of any action taken regarding the building of a windmill is July 16, 1728, when it was voted at Town Meeting that "Richard Tew and David Green go and buy stores and irons for the building of a wind-mill and that Richard Tew and Thomas Carr Provide lumber for the aforesaid mill." Incidentally this was the same Richard Tew and Thomas Carr who were ordered to get lumber to build a "pare of stocks and whipping post," which never were built. At the next Quarterly Meeting, it was voted to rescind the former vote to build a windmill and it was ordered "that Thomas Carr and Richard Tew have authority to buy a mill complete and the charge to be paid by the town treasurer." While there are records in Newport of windmills having been sold complete and moved, it is very unlikely that, in those days, a mill could have been ferried across the bay.

It is to be assumed that they proceeded to build their own mill. On April 15, 1729, it was voted to "hire Sixty pounds for the use of the mill", and on July 5 it was voted "that the Treasury Give Richard Tew a bond in the Towns behalf for his acco't of Charges on the Mill which amounts to £78 00 6p." The same action was taken on the account due Thomas Carr. On May 19, 1730, it was voted "that the mill be fitted upon ye Town's charge and the keeper of s'd mill to Deliver her in the same good order as he rec'd her." It is thus evident that this, probably the second windmill, was grinding meal during the summer of 1730. It is believed to have stood somewhat north of the present mill on Windmill Hill. At an adjourned Quarterly Meeting held at Wm. Battey's house August 4, 1730, they decided to have a permanent miller and voted "That Nicholas Carr shall have ye mill that is erected on Jamestown at ye Publick Charge of the Town; for his own Proper Estate for Ever. He ye S'd Nicholas Carr Paying the Sum of fifty pounds into the Town Treasury, and be obliged to keep S'd mill in good Repair for and during ye terme of Twenty Years If ye maine post of S'd mill with good manigement will stand so Long; and to give bond for ye Trew preformance of all ye above articles unto ye Town Clerk who shall Receive ye same upon ve Towns acct."



JAMESTOWN WINDMILL

Photo, J. M. Watson

From the reference to the "maine post" this would seem to be the mill described by T. R. Cole in the Jamestown section of the "History of Newport County," which is as follows;

"The first of these mills of which any definite knowledge can now be gleaned was the Post Mill. It was built on the principle of a turn-stile, and when the wind changed a yoke of oxen was hitched to the end of a long lever, and the whole building, which stood upon a single post or pivot, was turned until the arms of the shaft came fair into the wind. The frame is of heavy oak timbers, and the wind wheel is fifty-four feet in diameter."

Evidently all went well with the mill for several years for there is no further mention of it until January 19, 1742, when it was voted at a Quarterly Meeting "that Gersham Remington and John Martin is apinted to talk to Nicholas Carr to keep the mill in Repare." Nicholas Carr had removed to Newport sometime before this vote was taken. No report of Remington or Martin is found, and that seems to be all the information available. What happened to the mill is unknown. Sometime between 1742 and 1760 that "maine post" must have given out for at Town Meeting January 15, 1760 a vote to build a grist mill was passed in the negative.

Eight years later Isaac Howland must have made a proposition to the town, for the warrant calling the meeting included the question "whether the town will Raise one Hundred Dollars by Rate to assist Isaac Howland in Erecting a Windmill on his Land under proper Regulations as shall be agreed on by the town." At the meeting (January 19, 1768) the above question was "Resolved in the Affirmative by a Majority of Voices, five." "It was thereupon put to Vote whether the s'd sum of one Hundred Spanish Mill'd Dollars should be raised by a rate or tax, on the polls & ratable Estates of the Inhabitants of this town, for the Purpose afore s'd which vote passed in the Negative by a Majority of five Voices." Their action seems a bit confused. Evidently they were willing for the town to raise the money but not by a rate or tax. There is no evidence that a mill was built at this time either by the town or by Howland.

Not until 1787 was the matter again considered, when a committee was appointed to investigate the cost. They proved themselves thrifty men by petitioning the General Assembly for the grant of a part of Col. Joseph Wanton's farm which had been confiscated. Wanton was a Tory and had left the island when the British evacuated Newport. The petition was granted and the town was given half an acre for this purpose. If, however, the mill became useless or unused for a period of two years, the land was to revert to the state. The mill was built and part of the money was raised by the sale of the highways "running between the North Point Farm and Jonathan Hopkins' and Tiddeman Hull's, and the highway running through Joseph Martin's Farm."

Jethro Briggs was the first miller and was required to give bond in money or "as much corn as one hundred dollars will purchase." Briggs moved to Newport in 1793 and the mill was without a miller. In 1795 it was sold at public auction to Benjamin Carr, but evidently he never took possession,

for the next year Briggs sold it to Nathan Munroe for 301 Spanish milled dollars. From here on the record is complete to 1893, the mill having been owned by ten persons in that period. The highest price, \$3,000, was paid by Isaac W. Potter in 1874. Thomas A. H. Tefft was the last operating owner and his brother Jesse, the last miller. It was not operated after 1896.

The mill remained idle and neglected for many years. The inside woodwork and fittings had been torn out for fire wood, and the mill was fast falling to decay.

In 1904, Mrs. Frank H. Rosengarten, a number of other summer residents and those at the Carr Homestead formed an informal Windmill Society and, in a determined effort to raise money to preserve the old mill, sent out the following appeal:

"We, the undersigned, hereby pledge ourselves to give the amounts written opposite our names, for the purpose of purchasing and repairing the old wind mill. It has been ascertained that the mill and land enough to drive around it with right of way thereto, can be purchased for a maximum sum of three hundred dollars and repairs sufficient to keep the mill standing for many years can be made for four hundred dollars. Unless these repairs be made at once, it is evident that the old structure must soon be a thing of the past, for it cannot stand through another winter in its present condition. We earnestly believe that this destruction should not take place before our eyes without an effort on our part to prevent it; for if the mill is once destroyed, no amount of money can ever replace it. Not only is it an object of beauty in itself and a fine specimen of a type of building very rare in this country, but it is one of the few remaining links which bind us to the past, and almost the only object of interest of which Jamestown can boast. We therefore believe that the aforementioned sums of money cannot be better expended than in preserving this old land mark for future generations."

The response was enthusiastic and the Windmill was purchased. Miss Louise Carr and her mother, who then owned the Wanton farm on which the mill stood, gave half an acre of land, thereby providing an entrance to the mill from the road. Mr. Theophilus B. Stork executed the deeds and attended to all legal matters. The deeds were retained by Mrs. Rosengarten until 1912, when the Historical Society, first proposed by Mrs. Elizabeth Carr Locke of Los Angeles, was formed. The two societies combined under the name of the Jamestown Historical Society, and with Miss Lena Clarke as the first president, the old mill became the property of this new society.

The present condition of the mill is still as described by Miss Maud Stevens in her brochure "The Jamestown Windmill", (1926) which we quote:

"The mill as it stands at present is externally in its original condition. Within, unfortunately, the depredations already alluded to, have entirely destroyed its ancient appearance. Hopper, meal chest, stairs even were broken up and burned. Nothing remains but the mill stones which are in a somewhat unusual position. Most of these old mills are what is known as "double gear," a part of the machinery being under the lower mill stone, or bed stone. This mill is "single gear," finding room for its reduced number of wheels in the attic story above. Thus it is not necessary to raise the stones as high as the second story, but instead they rest on a low platform. The second story was used simply as a store room.

Though the mill has been thus stripped of its fittings, the society has been fortunate, during the past summer, in the gift of a hopper from a disused mill in Narragansett, presented by Mr. George H. Clark, of Shannock, R. I., and it is hoped that this much appreciated addition may be supplemented in the future by other fittings. The society is anxious to restore the old features now, while there are those still living who can give exact information on the subject. It would be a most interesting thing to see the mill once more in operation, and the miller again with his toll dish, taking his share from the corn brought in to be ground."

#### DUTCH ISLAND

Dutch Island was included with Conanicut in the original purchase from the Indians. For many years it was held in common, each of the proprietors being allowed to use it as a pasture, generally for sheep. About 1750 it was divided up among the proprietors of Conanicut in proportion to their holdings at that time. Those not interested in holding their share disposed of it. In his will Caleb Carr gave to his son Nicholas "also that right in the share of Dutch Island which belongeth to said farm." Finally in 1860, after nearly one hundred years, the entire island was owned by Powell H. Carpenter. Four years later (1864) it was taken over by the U. S. Government and the army fortified it with long range guns and erected barracks for men stationed there. For many years the ferry from Jamestown made regular stops there. The island now is deserted of soldiers and the guns have been dismantled. The lighthouse at the south end of the island was erected about 1840.

## JAMESTOWN SCHOOLS

It is stated in Callender's "Discourse" that the first school in Newport, if not in New England, was established August 20, 1640, and "Rev. Robert Lenthal was, by vote, called to keep a public school for the learning of youth, and for his encouragement there was granted to him and his heirs one hundred acres of land, and four more for a house lot." Praetically all the early settlers of Jamestown came from Newport and, of course, realized the advantages of having a school. They were too few, however, to support a school; the increase in population was slow and it was many years before their first school house was built. Field states "This town (Jamestown) had its share of early private schools but no records were kept. It is a tradition that somewhere in the town a stone school house was built before the beginning of the present century (1800) but the first one of which anything positive is known was erected in December, 1802."

Referring to the town's records one finds the following interesting entries:

# Quarterly Meeting April 20, 1731.

"Voted that John Hammett be paid his house rent which is Ten pounds per annum out of the Town Treasury.

Voted that John Hammett as School master be allowed and paid out of the Town Treasury the sum of Ten pounds for the rent of his house for the past year, the 25 of March last, according to the former vote of the Town."

#### Town Meeting May 15, 1733

"Voted that liberty is granted to any of the freeman of this town to build a School house on the Artillery Lott."

"Voted that there be allowed Twenty Pounds towards the building the School house above mentioned to be paid out of the Town Treasury."

#### Proprietors Records

"1739—John Hammett left town"

## Town Meeting May 18, 1741

"Voted that Capt. Josiah Arnold Draw ye money that was formerly Given towards Building ye School house in Jamestown. Ye sum of Twenty Pounds."

You must draw your own conclusions, but it is not an impossible deduction that John Hammett kept a private school and the town contributed his house rent, 10 pounds, towards its support; also that sometime before 1741 Capt. Josiah Arnold had built a school house on the Artillery lot and was paid the twenty pounds voted by the town. In support of this latter deduction is found an entry in the town's records for January 20, 1767, "The meeting do appoint John Weeden and Nicholas Carr to view building on said lot (Artillery Lot) to see what addition or repairs are wanting, if any, to make the same a suitable workhouse for to put the poor of this town in." It is therefor evident that if it ever was used as a school house it was abandoned as such before 1767.

At the Town Meeting for September 17, 1801 it was voted "that all the inhabitants to the southward of John Weaver Jr. shall be included in the southern district for the purpose of building a School house within said destrict, and that said School house shall stand in the Road Leading to the beach where formerly Stood a Fort unless the Inhabitants within said destrict can Find some more Convenient Place." This was known as the South School. It was a one room school, where one class recited while the other classes studied, with one teacher teaching all grades—just another one of those "little red school houses" in which our forefathers received their education. Among the teachers remembered are Miss Querepil, Miss Laura Lutz (Mrs. Thomas Carr Watson), Miss Lucy A. Gardiner, Mrs. Scudder, Miss Lallah Morgan, now osteopathic physician in Providence, Mr. Louis Sanford, who later became an Episcopal Bishop of California.

As the village population increased the school could not accommodate all the pupils and a Primary School was built on the west side of Southwest Avenue, about where the office of the Jamestown Water Company now stands. Among the teachers remembered are Miss Helen Landers and Miss Nancy Cory (the late Mrs. George Barnes.)

Both of these schools were in continuous use until the new Carr Graded School was built in 1889. The Primary School building was given to the Philomenian Library and was moved to the Artillery Lot where it now stands.

The North School stood on the North Road at Carr's Lane. The first building was so close to the road that people riding by on horse back could reach in the windows. Later a new building was erected on the hill just to the west. It was in constant use until 1913.

Miss Edna Hammond taught there for many years. The building was sold to Miss Lucy Gardiner, who went to school there, and it was remodeled into a summer cottage. When the contractor, Mr. Ralph Hull, tore up the platform on which stood the teacher's desk he found an old sheet of paper on which he had solved a problem in arithmetic when he was a pupil there. It was marked 100.

While undoubtedly there were private teachers in the early years, this practice seemed to continue even after the schools had been established, as is shown by the following bills found in the Carr Homestead;

John Carr to	
Wanton Weeden Dr.	
1810 To ½ quarters tuition in simple reading at 10¢ per Quarter	\$0.88
To incidentals for firing	.17
	1.05
Mr. John Carr to Nathan Gardiner Dr.	
March 14, 1815.	
To the tuition of Son Peleg 5 weeks	.60
Son Thomas 1 week	.17
•	.77
Credited by Leather	.29
	.48
Peleg Carr to Robert H. Weeden Dr.	
March 15, 1833	
To the tuition of John E. Carr & Wm. C. Carr from Decem-	
ber 1st to March 15—\$2. per quarter is	4.66
To wood	.88
	5.54

In 1889 a new grammar school was built on South West Avenue, called the Carr School. Registration 80 with an average attendance of 43. The town appropriated \$625. and received \$409. from the state. In 1899 the registration was 151, average attendance 94. Eight teachers were employed. The town appropriated \$2025. and the state \$420. The Clarke School was built in 1923. The Carr School now takes kindergarten through the 4th

grade and has an enrollment of 183. The Clarke School takes grade 5 through the 8th and also has a Home Economics Room and a Manual Training room. Enrollment 115. 13 teachers are employed.

## JAMESTOWN PHILOMENIAN LIBRARY

An old "History of Rhode Island" states that "The Philomenian Debating Society was organized about the year 1828. The members agreed to pay one dollar a year toward a fund to start a library." Around the middle of the century the northern part of the island had two small libraries. One was known as the John J. Watson Library, very likely because the books were kept in his house. He then owned the Capt. Paine farm and lived in the old farm house later known for many years as "Cajacet". The books were kept in a little cupboard and a list of the books was pasted on the inside of the door. The other library was at the home of Peleg C. Carr on Carr's Lane and was known as the "Jamestown Philomenian Library Association." The books were kept in a cupboard at the head of the back stairs. This library was incorporated in 1847 under its original name.

In November, 1874, an informal meeting of those interested in forming a library at the village was held in Wm. H. Knowles' grocery store; those attending were Thomas G. Carr, John B. Landers, Thomas Carr Watson, Eunice B. Carr, Allen Gardiner, Wm. H. Knowles and Chas. E. Weeden. The two libraries were combined into the Jamestown Philomenian Library. By this combination and other book contributions, they were entitled to receive financial assistance from the State Board of Education. The books were kept in the home of Mrs. G. A. Clarke, who was the first librarian.

Mrs. Eben Tefft was appointed librarian in 1879 and the Library was moved to her house, known as the Patty Congdon house. Soon after, the Library was moved to the rear of the Town Hall. Mrs. L. C. Hammond was appointed Librarian in 1889 and continued to serve until 1929, completing forty years of faithful service. Her daughter Edna served as assistant librarian. Mrs. Mary Hammond was then appointed librarian with Miss Clara Clarke as assistant, both serving until 1944 when Miss Clara Clarke, the present librarian, was appointed.

When the Carr School was built in 1889, the two school buildings were vacated and the Primary school building was given to the Association for a Library building. It was moved to its present site on Narragansett Avenue, in the south-east corner of the original Artillery Lot.

Thomas Carr Watson was president for 45 years and Miss Sarah W. Carr was vice-president for about the same period. The present officers are Mr. Fred Caswell, president, Mr. Julian Collart, vice-president, Miss Clara Clarke, treasurer, and Mrs. A. W. Bowser, secretary. Miss Clara Clarke is librarian, assisted by Mrs. Louise Braman. In 1948 the library possessed 15,033 books—12,968 adult and 2965 juvenile. The circulation of books for that year was 10,147.

# Religious Societies

## THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS OR QUAKERS

THEN Dr. John Clarke, William Coddington and their friends purchased the Island of Rhode Island from the Indians and started the settlement at Pocasset, now Portsmouth, a compact of government was drawn up which read in part: "It is ordered that none shall be accounted a delinquent for doctrine." So well was this observed that Cotton Mather said, "It has been a Collusion of Antinomians, Familists, Anabaptists, Antisabbatarians, Arminians, Soeinians, Quakers, Rantets, everything in the world but Roman Catholics and real Christians—though of the latter, I hope, there have been more than the former among them; so that if a man had lost his religion, he might find it at the general muster of the opinionists." About 1648, George Fox founded the Society of Friends in England and, in spite of persecution and imprisonment, the society grew in numbers and they were zealous in spreading their belief. In this country the only welcoming hand was extended by Newport; even Roger Williams was active against them. As early as 1656, Quakers had settled in Newport. Fox himself preached there in 1672, and by 1700 their teachings had affected the entire population of the island. The leading citizens were active members of the society. As a natural consequence the large majority of the settlers of Jamestown were Quakers. Their attendance at the Newport Meetings was infrequent and meetings were soon held at members' houses on the island. An entry in the Newport Meeting records reads, "At a man and womens meeting at ye house of Mathew Borden the 24th Day 12 mo, 1684 this meeting has thought fit with the approbation of Jamestown alias Quononoquott to sett a quarterly meeting at Nicholas Carrs in said town to begin the second day after our monthly meeting in the first month next." In 1693 Thomas Chalkley preached on Jamestown. For the "14th of 4th mo 1709" the Newport records read, "it was proposed at this meeting by Representatives of Jamestown yt there is necessity of building a meeting house at Jamestown which is referred to next monthly meeting." The records for that meeting read, "ye 9th day ye 6 mo. 1709. This meeting doth give leave for the Friends of Jamestown to build a meeting house on their island."

In the Land Evidence records for 1710 there is recorded a deed by Ebenezer Slocomb to the "land on which a meeting house stands where the people ealled Quakers are won't to worship." (see under Old Houses—Ebenezer Slocomb) This definitely establishes that the first meeting house was built 1709-10. Also by this deed the location is established on the north side of North Ferry Road, later Cemetery Lane, now Eldred Avenue, in what is known as the old cemetery. About 35 years ago funds were raised to clear up this old cemetery, which was all overgrown with brush and trees. After

this was done and the old grave stones set up and repaired, there, in the south east corner, directly in front of the entrance, was a clear space entirely free from graves, where, undoubtedly, stood the first meeting house.

The next twenty-three years passed without anything of particular interest except the general growth of the settlement. It has been previously noted that, as the numbers on the island increased, the center of population crept towards the south. This brought about the next change which is best told by the records themselves.

#### 25 of the 10 mo 1733

"This meeting having had further conference concerning Jamestown meeting house, it is desired that the friends of that town do consider among themselves whether it may not be for the General Service and Benefit to Remove s'd meeting house or dispose of that and build another at some more convenient place and make a full return of their minds in that matter to our next Mo meeting and David Green is desired to acquaint the friends of Jamestown accordingly."

#### Newport 29th ye 11th mo 1733

"This meeting being informed that the persons that the deed of Jamestown meeting house was made to, are all deceased excepting David Green therefore this meeting doth desire David Green to make a deed of Conveyance of s'd house & the land belonging thereto to Daniel Weeden, John Hull, Tho Carr and David Green Jr. and make report to next monthly meeting.

"Whereas Jamestown friends are desirous to build a new meeting house on their Island and Nicholas Carr signified that he is willing to give as much land as is needful for that purpose and this meeting desires said Nicholas Carr to pass a deed of conveyance for the s'd purpose to Sam'l Clarke, Daniel Weeden, Tho Carr and John Hull and make report to next Mo meeting."

## Newport 26th da 1 mo 1734

"Sam'l Clarke makes report that Nicholas Carr hath passed a deed of conveyance of a quarter of an acre at Jamestown to set a new meeting house on, to the Persons nominated at a former Mo. meeting."

#### Portsmouth 27th ye 6 mo 1734

"This meeting doth desire Sam'l Clarke and Nicholas Carr to Remove the old meeting house at Jamestown to the place where is appointed to build the new meeting house and to build an addition or 18 foot leantew fashion with a chimney at the end and see what subscription they can get and make report to our next Mo. meeting."

#### Newport 26th of the 9th mo. 1734

"Nicholas Carr and Sam'l Clarke brought an acc't of charge for moving & building their meeting house amounting to £114 - 4 - 10 which is allowed and ordered to be paid by John Casey out of the meeting stock."

The deed of Nicholas Carr appears in the Land Evidence Records for March 31, 1734, and by the boundaries given, we find the land is that on which the present meeting house stands. Peace and contentment reigned for many years. The remarkable growth and almost universal acceptance of the belief and teachings of the Society of Friends in Newport, Jamestown and Portsmouth is worthy of particular notice. The 19 men and their families who settled Pocasset (now Portsmouth) had all been banished from the

Bay Colony at Boston because of their religious beliefs. In 1639 this little colony divided and the settlement at Newport was started. Dr. John Clarke and his followers established a Baptist Church while William Coddington, Nicholas Easton, John Coggeshall and their followers formed a society called "Friends of Truth" whose beliefs were remarkably like those later held by the Society of Friends or Quakers. Newport was the only place where the Quakers from England could land but here they received a hearty welcome and found fertile ground for the spreading of their belief. Groups of Friends were soon organized and meetings were held in private houses. A Monthly Meeting was organized in 1658 and the New England Yearly Meeting in 1661. (This meeting was held annually at Newport until 1902.) In 1669 the Rhode Island Quarterly Meeting was organized. By 1743 the society had so increased in membership that it was not uncommon for 5,000 people to assemble from near and distant points to attend the New England Yearly Meeting at Newport.

In 1775 the British fleet sailed into the harbor and took possession of Newport and the fortified parts of Jamestown. The effect of this occupation on the meeting house is again best told by the records.

## Newport 26th. 3 mo 1776

"This meeting being informed that Friends have mostly moved from Jamestown therefore this meeting doth appoint Gould Marsh & Thomas Gould Jun. to inquire into circumstances of S'd Friends & the meeting there & report to next monthly meeting."

Newport 28th 5 mo 1776

"The Friends who had the care of the matter respecting friends at Jamestown made return which is accepted as followeth:

"Agreeable to appointment we have made some inquiry respecting the Meeting & Meeting House of Friends at Jamestown and were informed that some time in the tenth month that most friends belonging thereto left the Island whereby the meeting ceased and that the soldiers possessed themselves of the House which suffered considerably from them in which condition it still remains and but one family of friends as yet returned and settled on the Island."

#### Newport 25 of 7 mo 1776

"The Preparative Meeting of Newport informed that Friends at Jamestown had represented to them that they have for some time past laboured under some disadvantage in regard to holding their Meeting at Private Houses and proposed for Friends approbation for their better accommodation whereupon we appoint Robert Dennis, Isaac Lawton, Richard Mitchell, Gould Marsh and William Almy to confer with Friends at Jamestown aforesaid, respecting the above."

The committee appointed to confer with friends at Jamestown respecting the building a meeting house reported as follows, viz,

#### Newport 26th of 9th mo 1786

"According to our appointment, we have conferred with the Friends of Jamestown respecting building a Meeting house at that place, and it is our Judgement that it may be well that there be one built, provided that it can be accomplished in the way by them proposed viz to procure Mon'ies by subscription to purchase



FRIEND'S MEETING HOUSE

Photo, J. M. Watson

the material and to do the Labour at their own expense And think that a building 26 ft. by 20 of one story high, sufficiently capacious to accommodate them."

In the records of the Newport Meeting for the 24th of the 6th month 1788, it is stated that the money raised for building a new meeting house was not sufficient and it was voted that £7-11-5 pence be paid out of the general treasury. It is thus conclusive that the new meeting house, which is the one now standing, was built in 1786 or 1787.

As has already been noted, Jamestown reached the peak of its population about 1775. Then came the war and the meeting house was occupied by the British soldiers.

During these difficult times meetings were again held in the members' homes. After the war a new meeting house was built but many of the members had left the island, and the society failed to attain the strength it had before the war. However, so firmly was the Society of Friends established on the island that for a period of 125 years after their first meeting house had been built, no other religious sect had erected a place of worship. The only other services held during that time were those of Dr. MacSparran, a minister of the Church of England, who occasionally held services in private homes.

As the center of population drew away from the location of the meeting house and new sects erected churches in the village the Quakers gradually became so few in numbers that the society dissolved its membership. Regular Sunday meetings have not been held for many years, but during the summer months the old meeting house is opened during July and August, and meetings are held by the summer residents belonging to the Society of Friends.

#### SERVICES OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

Conducted by Rev. James MacSparran, D.D.

The activities of Dr. MacSparran are revealed only in his diary and only for the years 1743-4-5 and 1751. The manuscript was discovered in 1868 in the attic of a newly elected president of Brown University when he was moving to the president's house. The diary speaks mostly of work on his farm, trouble with his slaves and his social activities. His references to services held on Jamestown deserve a place under this heading.

Dr. MacSparran was a missionary of the Venerable Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, of the Church of England. He came here as a young man in 1721, married Hannah Gardiner, of one of the prominent families in Narragansett, and became rector of the Old Narragansett Church, known as "St. Paul's in Narragansett." It was located at the Platform on Congdon Hill on the Dark Corner or Shermantown Road. In 1800 it was moved to Wickford and now each year during August, is opened for vesper services. His home, the "Glebe House", was on the west bank of Narrow River, on the River Road, just north of the Narrows at Boston Neck. It is still standing.

In the Narragansett Church Register, August 14, 1741, it is recorded, "Pursuant to a request made in writing by sundry gentlemen of Jamestown, alias Conanicut, to the Revd Dr. MacSparran the said Doctor preached at Capt. Josiah Arnolds house." There was no church building on the island during his life and he generally held his services in the home of John Martin, Thomas Paine, or Josiah Arnold, grandson of Gov. Benedict Arnold, and brother-in-law of Mrs. MacSparran.

## Extracts from Diary

#### 1743

- June 5 Mr. Morris officiated at my church and I went and officiated at Conanicut.
- July 5 People so busy at Conanicut, by reason of Drought and worms could not break off their harvest to attend, so I did not go.
- July 23.... and in yy great goodness bring to a sight and sense of his sinful ways my poor Bro Arnold, who seems, from no provocation, but in obedience to the evil one he dwells with, to oppose the Progress of ye church in yt poor, benighted Island.
- Aug'st 1 Col Homans dined with me. I wrote Bro Arnold an expostulatory Lr upon the Causeless Abuses, he has lately given me.
- Aug'st 2 I preached at Conanicut. Capt. Paine promised to deliver Mr. Arnold my letter as soon as he should come home from Milford.

  - I dined at home and Col. Updike is here in order to stay all night.
    We had a shower of Rain and it's like to be more. I complained to Col. Updike of my bad usage from Mr. Honeyman and Arnold.
- August 14..... My servants told me that the unhappy Mr. Arnold is come over to the Quaker meeting. That lewd woman will ruin him. This is a confirmatory Instance of y<sup>t</sup> the Conventicle is the Sink of y<sup>e</sup> Ch.
- October 27 At Conanicut once a month all ye winter of 1743.

- September 4 Officiated at Conanicut. Baptized an adult viz<sup>t</sup> William Mott. Married George Dunwel to Phebe Tennant. A congregation of above an 100 in both rooms.
- October 9 Preached at Conanicut. My discourse turned chiefly on ye accident of blowing up yt happened to Sueton Grant, Nath Coddington, Jno Gidley and one Mr Taylor, yt are all dead.

#### 1745

January 13 I officiated at Conanicut.

August 6 I preached at Conanicut and from there went to Newport where I stayed till Friday morning.

September 3 From Boston Neck I went and officiated at Conanicut and returned ye same day.

September 30 I heard Joseph Hull, the Quaker, preach, as, alas, it is called.

October 1 I officiated at Conanicut and this night have writ a Certificate of Abraham Dennis's Marriage.

1751

- August 5 We got up early and I drove my wife to ye Ferry in her way to Newport whither she is gone and Peter and Bolico to attend her. I went over ye Ferry with her whre we waited long for the Boat; but having got over about 10 ante merid we went to Mr. Martin's and stayed to dinner.
- October 22 I went over the Ferry to Conanicut, dined with Mr. Martin and got to Newport in ye afternoon.
- October 29 Fearing a storm I come over the Ferrys and thro' God's Goodness got home safely by walking from Capt. Bill's.
- October 30 Cold and windy with ye wind at Northwest, I thank God I came yesterday since I could not have crossed ye Ferrys with so much wind agst me.

#### Notes

Capt. Paine was a resident of Conanicut, much interested in the maintenance of Church services on the island. Capt. Paine married Mercy Carr, daughter of Gov. Caleb Carr, and on March 13, 1745, Dr. MacSparran married their daughter Mercy to William Dyer. (See under Old Houses—Nicholas Carr House)

Newport—Then the most important place in the colony. Letters are said to have been, in those days, sometimes sent from England, addressed "New York, near Newport"

#### THE BAPTIST SOCIETY

It will be recalled that when the settlement at Pocasset divided and the settlement at Newport was started the followers of William Coddington formed a religious society with a belief very much in accord with that of the Quakers, while the followers of Dr. John Clarke formed themselves into a Baptist Society. As Conanicut was settled by people from Newport, it is natural to assume that some of these people were Baptists. Just when they began holding services on Jamestown is not known, but in the records of the 1st Baptist Society we find the following:

"We the said Oliver Hopkins, Wm. A. Weeden, Daniel W. Carr, John E. G. Weeden and Elisha Case, Taking into consideration the inconvenience of holding religious meetings in the school house it being too small to hold those who attended, this day after meeting met at Wm. A. Weedens and agreed to meet at the North

School House the first Monday in June, To associate ourselves together and become a society and petition to be incorporated.

"At a meeting holden at the North School House the first Monday in June 1841, Oliver Hopkins, Elisha Case Wm. A. Weeden John E. G. Weeden and Daniel Carr agreed to form themselves into a society and petition the Legislature for an act of Incorporation."

From this it would appear that services were being held in the North School House located on the North Road at Carr's Lane. At this meeting they adopted a "Constitution, Rules and Regulations" and took the name "1st Baptist Society of Jamestown." In July 1841 Oliver Hopkins was elected Moderator, John E. G. Weeden, Secretary and Daniel W. Carr, Treasurer. It was also "Voted that John E. G. Weeden & Daniel W. Carr



1ST BAPTIST MEETING HOUSE — LATER GUILD HALL

be continued a Committee to procure a lot of land to build a Meeting House upon and that Daniel W. Carr take the deed of the said lot as Treasurer & his Successors in said office for this corporation."

Their meeting of February 19, 1845 was held at the 1st Baptist Meeting House, so evidently the Meeting House had been built sometime between 1841-45. It stood on the west side of the North Road, half way between the North School House and the Battey house. At this meeting it was voted: "That the 1st day Baptists of Jamestown shall have the use of the 1st Baptist Meeting House first days and Evenings of said days in succession Commencing the 1st Sunday in March A.D. 1845 Forever & that the Seventh Day Baptists shall have the use of said Meeting House every fifth First Day and Evening after the 4th as above Forever."

The members of the society were mostly farmers living on the northern part of the island, but the village envisaged by the original purchasers along the 4 rod road (Narragansett Avenue) was beginning to materialize and fast becoming the center of the island population. Realizing this the society on October 25, 1856, resolved:

"That this Corporation believe it be expedient for the Welfare of Sion to alter the location of the 1st Baptist Meeting House to a more central place or sell the same and build another if found to be advisable.

The forgoing resolutions having been signed by 3/4 of the members of the Society and More. Viz.

Wm. A. Weeden, Oliver Hopkins, John E. G. Weeden, Walter S. Weeden, George W. Weeden, Daniel W. Carr, John W. Carr, John Congdon, Joseph M. Carr, Wm. P. Weeden, Philip Caswell.

"It was voted and resolved that we will make an effort to carry into effect the said resolution.

"Voted that the committee be instructed to procure a Lot of land upon which to locate the Meeting House; somewhere Between the Friends Meeting House and the Bridge."

Evidently the Meeting house was not built at the location suggested, for at the meeting of June 25th. 1874, \$75.00 was raised by subscription to "repair the malicious damage done to the Meeting House."

The members of the church were mostly from the farming section of the northern part of the island, but in the late 1800's the village along old Ferry Road, now Narragansett Avenue, had become a reality. The sailboat ferries had their landings at the east and west ends and Ferry Road had become the main thoroughfare of the island.

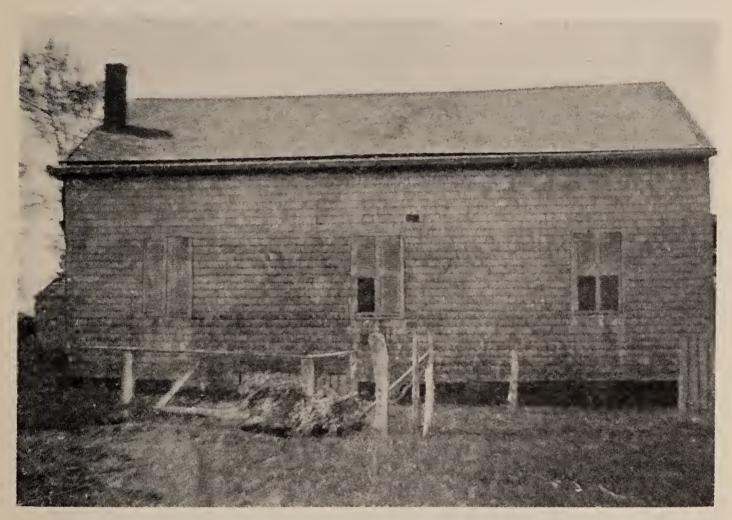
As with the Quakers, so it was with the Baptists—their church was too far from the center of population. In 1867 a new Baptist society, the Central Baptist Church, was organized by Henry, Stephen C., Benjamin C., William H., Sister Mary W. and Sister H. E. Gardner, and in 1868 the first church at the village, then referred to as "the Ferry" was completed. Rev. James Hammond was the first minister. In 1890 the congregation had outgrown the building and in 1891 a new church, the one now standing at the corner of Narragansett and Southwest Avenues, was completed and has been in use ever since. The old church had been moved to Cole Street and is now used by the colored people as a place of worship.

It is evident that the original Baptist Society could no longer carry on and April 7, 1905, they voted to "deed the Meeting House of this Society to the Newport Episcopal Convocation by the Treasurer of the Society." This old Meeting House is now privately owned and has been remodeled into a private dwelling.

#### EPISCOPAL CHURCH

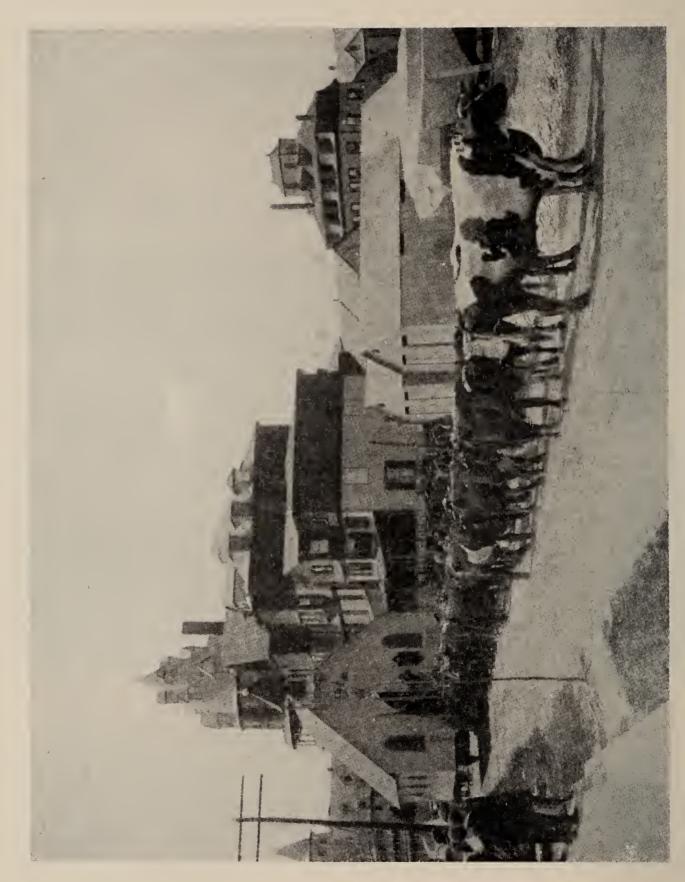
In 1833, the inhabitants of the island, feeling the need of stated religious services, erected a meeting house, capable of seating 200 persons, on the Artillery lot about where the library now stands. The pulpit was supplied

by ministers of various denominations. In 1836 St. Matthews Parish was founded on St. Matthew's Day, September 21, and in June, 1837, the parish was admitted into union with the Rhode Island Episcopal Convention. In the summer of that year the pew holders called in the aid of the Rhode Island Convention and a debt of \$165 was discharged and a deed to the church "taken in trust." Rev. Edward Wayland was the first minister. There was no resident minister for many years, the pulpit being supplied by Rev. Benjamin Hickok, Rev. Samuel Penny Jr. and Rev. John Suddard who, being in Priest's orders, was the first rector of the parish.



FIRST EPISCOPAL CHURCH — LATER DOUGLASS HALL

For 17 years, beginning 1849, Rev. George Anthony was in charge of the church. In 1878 Rev. Dr. Magill took charge, making it a mission of Trinity Parish, Newport. Through his untiring and zealous work a new interest was awakened and it was decided to build a new church. Dr. V. Mott Francis, a summer resident, was the moving spirit in this endeavor which was brought to a successful conclusion. The old building was moved off the Artillery lot and became known as Douglas Hall. Later it was remodeled into a private home. The new church, the one now standing, was consecrated on the Feast of St. Matthew, 1880. George C. Mason Jr. of Newport was the architect and Gordon D. Oxx of Jamestown, the contractor.



It was continued as a mission of Trinity Parish until 1896 when, by a vote of the congregation, the parish became independent and the Rev. Charles E. Preston was appointed the first resident rector of the independent parish.

Before coming to Jamestown Mr. Preston had conceived the idea of a chapel which could be moved from one place to another. After being on Jamestown for a while it seemed to him that the conditions there fitted perfectly with this idea. The village centered around Ferry Road (Narragansett Avenue) and was supplied with churches. But at the north end of the island was a thriving summer community at Conanicut Park, while half way between the Park and the village was a year round community of farmers. Mr. Preston presented the idea to Bishop Clark, who gave it his enthusiastic approval. Money was raised by public subscription and a contract to build the Movable Chapel, mounted on wheels, was given to George L. Barber. The unusual character of the project aroused great interest over a wide territory. The final cost was surprisingly low as most of the interior fittings and church furnishings were donated by the manufacturers.

The chapel was completed in the early spring of 1899, and on April 18 fourteen yoke of oxen, gathered from Middletown and Jamestown, were hooked up to the chapel and, accompanied by a throng of interested spectators, started out for Conanicut Park. After successfully completing several miles of their journey they ran into difficulties on Stork's hill at the farm of the Hon. T. G. Carr. Realizing that it was impossible to go any further Mr. Carr said "better wheel her in here", indicating a corner of one of his meadows. This was done and the chapel remained there for many years.

On June 3rd probably the greatest assemblage of church dignitaries ever to gather on the island came to lay the corner stone and conduct consecration services. The chapel was crowded to overflowing and the clergy vested in the nearby summer residence of Mr. T. B. Stork. Services were thereafter held quite regularly during the four years rectorate of Mr. Preston.

In 1900 Mr. Preston was succeeded by Rev. Chas. D. Burrows. Chapel services were infrequent until finally, with the father gone, the child was neglected and the chapel was never used again. After several years it was moved across the lots to a site on the North Road just south of the old North Meeting House, then called Guild Hall. It was finally moved to a site just north of the Bay Voyage Hotel where it was very artistically remodeled into a private residence by Mrs. J. H. A. Day.

After 35 years of service Mr. Burrows was succeeded by Rev. Albert C. Larned, who in turn was followed by Rev. John Howard Wright. The present rector, Rev. Herbert J. Dowling, assumed his duties December 14, 1948.

#### CATHOLIC CHURCH

During a visit of Archbishop Kendrick of St. Louis and Archbishop Ryan of Philadelphia at the summer home of Mrs. Ferris of St. Louis the first mass celebrated on the island was held at the Thorndike Hotel, July 20, 1890.

In 1893 James Wilcox of Philadelphia, since looked upon as the actual founder of the present congregation, donated a large plot of ground on Clinton Avenue as a building site for a Catholic Church. Although the resident Catholics were few, they at once responded to Mr. Wilcox's example. Through the united efforts of the Catholic residents and summer visitors, aided by several gifts from non-catholics, an attractive church edifice was soon erected, in which services were regularly held during the next fourteen seasons. The mission was attached to St. Mary's Newport, whose rectors, Rev. Fathers Grace and Meehan, undertook this additional charge. During the summer of 1909 the mission was served by Rev. P. J. Sullivan, a former Newporter, and success attended his labors from the beginning.

In October, 1909, by direction of Bishop Harkins, the rapidly growing mission passed from the jurisdiction of St. Mary's to become itself a permanent parish, and Father Sullivan became the new pastor. He secured the Dr. Littlefield estate on Narragansett Avenue, with a commodious house admirably adapted for a rectory. The church was then moved from Clinton Avenue to the new site, mass being celebrated there for the first time on Christmas day, 1909. Since then the church building has been greatly enlarged.

Father Sullivan was succeeded by Rev. Edward L. Tierney, who served until his death, October 25, 1941. Rev. Robert C. Cassidy served for four years and was succeeded by Rev. Francis P. Brady. The present pastor, Rev. Thomas J. Greely, was recently appointed. The membership is somewhat over 800 and several church societies have helped materially in the development of the church.

A large Guild Hall was built during the first world war for the use of the service men stationed at the forts. During the second world war 128 boys and 4 women served in various branches of the service, and Rev. Joseph Gallagher served as chaplain in the navy. Francis Zweir was the only boy from St. Mark's to make the supreme sacrifice.

Plans have been drawn for a new church to replace the present building, which is too small to accommodate the increasing demands of the parish.

# Old Houses and Farms

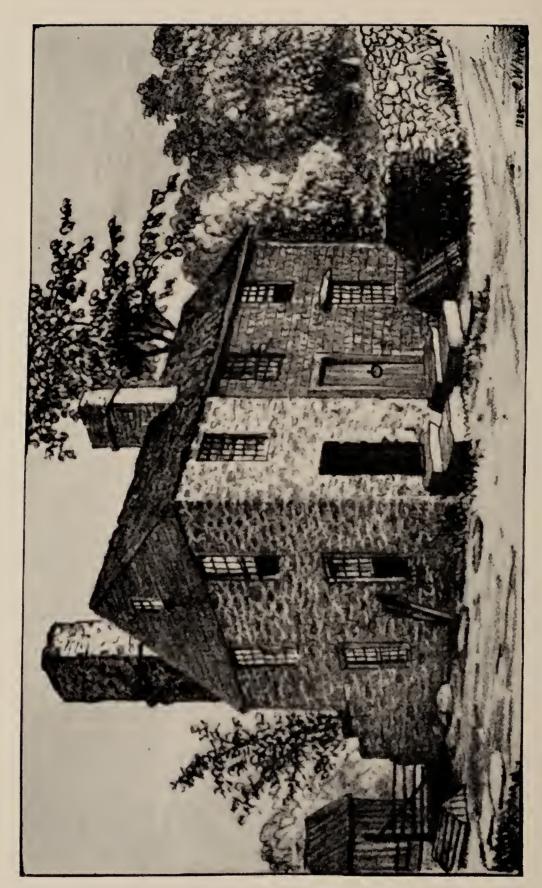
OST of the old houses have disappeared from view and faded from memory. A few are still standing and occupied and the location of some others can be determined by the remains of the cellar and foundation walls. It would be an impossible task to identify them all as to original ownership or date of building but some mention of those now remembered should be made before they are entirely forgotten.

#### SAMUEL CARR HOUSE

Possibly the oldest house, in part, on the island and certainly the most intriguing is the Samuel Carr house located on the west side of the North Road at the southern entrance to Hull's swamp and Love Lane. It stands on part of the land allocated to Richard and Richard Smith Jr. of Narragansett on the Fisher map. As far as can be ascertained neither of these men ever lived on the island and must have sold their land as opportunity offered. When Caleb Carr bought the land, when he gave it to his son Edward or when the house was built seems to be lost in obscurity. Miss Lena Clarke, in a paper read before the Jamestown Historical Society, states "the house was built about 1686 by Governor Caleb Carr for his son Edward." While it has always been known as the Samuel Carr house there is no doubt that it was built by either Caleb or Edward.

The intriguing thing about the house is its dual construction, which is so unusual and difficult to understand. In this respect it is very similar to the Bull house in Newport, which was destroyed by fire in 1912. It faces south, like most of the old houses, and seems to be made up of two separate units. The west half is of stone construction with walls over 20 inches thick. Originally the outside stone walls went to the caves of the roof on the south, west and north sides. The stones are laid in shell mortar. The first floor of this half was the kitchen, the big fire-place, where all the cooking was done, being on the north side. The opening of the fire-place was flush with the inside wall, and the chimney, rising thirty or more feet, was outside the outer wall, leading one to believe that the fire-place and chimney were built after the stone walls of the house had been completed. Fifty or more years ago the chimney was blown down in a gale but the north wall of the house was unharmed. A door on the south side opened directly into the kitchen.

The east half of the house was built entirely of wood, with a cellar under it. There was an outside door only a few feet from the door in the stone construction. The chimney in the center of the house provided flues for fire-places for the first and second floors of the frame part of the house and, seemingly had no connection with the stone half.



It does not seem possible that the two units of the house could have been built at the same time. In fact it is very easy to imagine that the stone half was originally built for an entirely different and unknown purpose and possibly was already erected when Caleb Carr bought the land for his son Edward, who simply added the frame construction to the stone work and thereby had a fairly sizeable house with a minimum amount of labor.

A plausible explanation for the construction of the Bull house is found in the town's records for 1639 when the town voted "that the prison formerly agreed upon shall be finished . . . and that it shall be set near or joyned unto the howse of Henry Bull, Sargeant." But no such explanation can possibly apply to the Sam Carr house. The solution of the enigma must be left for others.

When repairing the house, probably after the chimney fell down, the old stone work was torn out down to the second floor and replaced with a frame construction. After several years of occupancy, unfortunately by people who did not appreciate its historical value, it became vacant and was falling into decay. It was recently purchased by Miss Elizabeth B. Howry, of Washington, D. C., who has made extensive repairs and taken a great interest in preserving, as far as possible, the original construction.

#### THE GREENE FARM HOUSE

In what is now known as Shoreby Hill stood the Greene Farm-house. A statement by Francis Brinley, previously quoted, says "John Greene was the first to improve his land and did plant hay-seed whereabout he did intend to build his house." The date of building is given as 1672 and it remained in the family for many generations. Joseph Greene, a descendant of the builder, gave his farm and house in trust for the benefit of the Friends' Church, and described it as: "My farm on the Island of Conanicut known by the name of the Greene Farm, and house thereon standing in which I now live (where my predecessors of the same name lived for generations back, if not from the first settlement of the Island by English Emigrants.")

After arranging in his will for the care of his two sisters, Anne and Mary Greene he ordered that his clock be kept in the southeast corner of the east front room; and that the west front chamber be kept in constant readiness for "Ministers and others traveling in the service of Truth." It was to be furnished with "two good bedsteads, two beds, two bolsters, two pair of pillows, and other necessary furniture."

He gave to Mary Carr, daughter of Benjamin and Elizabeth Carr, the sum of fifty dollars, "the use and occupancy by herself of the east front room chamber; with the bedroom and two small rooms adjoining over the kitchen, a passage up and down both the front and back stairs, and through the kitchen and washroom, together with a privilege in the cellar and wood-house of putting her vegetables and wood therein and a privilege of drawing water out of the well and to the rainwater also. All of which to be and remain unto her during her natural life, provided she remain single and continue to live

with my sisters (though not without wages) and to be respectful, kind, and attentive unto them as long as they or either of them live."

This will was contested by the heirs and was before the courts for many years before it was finally broken. The farm and house passed from the Society of Friends to the heirs who sold it to a land syndicate developing Shoreby Hill. The house has been moved and has been so rebuilt and enlarged that it is doubtful if the original structure can be determined. There are many Revolutionary stories told of this, as well as many of the other old houses, which were retold by Miss Lena Clarke in a paper (Number 1) read before the Jamestown Historical Society in 1920.

#### EBENEZER SLOCOMB HOUSE

Ebenezer Slocomb was the fourth child of Giles and Joan Slocomb. He was born in Portsmouth, March 25, 1650. About the time of his marriage to Mary Thurston, October 25, 1678, his father deeded to him about 100 acres of land in Jamestown and he and his wife soon settled there. The house stood on the north side of the old North Ferry road a short distance from the end of the present bridge. The location could be determined years ago by a pile of bricks, which had been the chimney. The dam which had been built to make a pond in which to wash sheep before shearing could also be seen. The farm extended from the present Cedar Cemetery to the shore. This has now all been graded and these landmarks have disappeared.

Ebenezer immediately became prominent in Jamestown affairs. He served as deputy from Jamestown for 16 terms and was speaker of the house, 1712-14. He also was a valuable minister of the Quakers, representing Jamestown in the Men's Monthly Meeting in Newport and Portsmouth. In 1709 the first Friend's Meeting House was built on the south-east corner of his farm and in 1710 he deeded ½ acre of land, "containing the house where the people called Quakers are won't to worship", to Joseph Mowry, John Hull, David Green and Ebenezer Slocomb Jr. in trust for the Society of Friends. This is now the old cemetery and the absence of grave stones in the south east corner undoubtedly indicates where the meeting house stood.

In 1707 he was granted a license to operate a ferry on the west side of Conanicut Island. He was also granted a license by the town to keep a house of entertainment for the benefit of travelers, which was renewed every year for many years. There is nothing but a persistent tradition, however, that he ever operated the ferry. He had 12 children, died April 13, 1715 and was buried in the Friends cemetery. No stone marks his final resting place.

## BENEDICT ARNOLD HOUSE

Benedict Arnold and William Coddington each contributed 1/20 of the purchase price of the island and, being the largest contributors, had the first choice of location. Coddington chose the north end of the island while Arnold chose all the land west and south of the beach at Mackerel Cove. Incidentally, all Jamestowners, when speaking of Benedict Arnold, instinctively add "not the traitor". Arnold's house was between the west shore of Mackerel Cove and the present Beaver Tail road on land owned by Mr. Nicholas Biddle. It is not known that Benedict Arnold ever lived on the island and it is assumed that the house was built by his son Josiah, with whom there was so much trouble over a piece of land for the Beaver Tail lighthouse. It was said that when the Arnolds left the island during the Revolutionary War, they buried all their silver and valuables down the well or somewhere on the farm. Many have dug for this supposedly buried treasure, but without success.

After passing the beach on the Beaver Tail road is a road leading to Fort Getty. On the brow of the hill stand two very old houses. The one on the right has been in the Cottrell family for many years. It is not known who was the builder or when it was built. The west end is very old and the original construction still remains, as is evidenced by the wide floor boards, the corner posts, not encased, which project into the room and the huge fireplace with baking oven in the back.

Sometime later an addition, larger than the original house, was added on the east side. Here again are found evidences of pre-revolutionary construction and the fact that this was only an addition to an already old house, would seem to date the original house sometime in the late 1600s.

Directly across the road is another very old house which, unfortunately, is almost beyond restoration. Here again are all the evidences of early construction. A very interesting and unusual feature is that the great fireplace for cooking is in the cellar, in this respect unlike any other house on the island. Neither the date of building nor the name of the builder is known. It is generally accepted that the house was burned during the Revolutionary period, but a new house was built on the old foundation soon afterwards for in 1780 Jonathan Law deeded the house and farm to Hazard Knowles. In the little burying ground on the property is a grave stone which reads "Josiah Arnold/ye son of/Josiah and Sarah/Arnold/aged 4 mo 20 days/Dec'd Sept/ye 3d 1694." So far as has been determined that stone bears the oldest date of any on the island.

In the possession of Miss Lena Clarke are two deeds showing that the house and farm passed from George Knowles to John Wilbur and from Wilbur, in 1852, to Charles Sherman, grandfather to Miss Clarke. The property remained in the Clarke family for many years and was finally sold to one who had no interest in the historical value of the house and it was fast falling into decay. Recently Mr. and Mrs. Sydney Wright have acquired both this and the Cottrell property and are taking a great interest in their plans to restore them as near as possible to their original condition.

Just who built these two houses in the pre-revolutionary period and why they were located so close together on the extreme north end of a thousand acre farm presents an interesting problem.

#### THE CARR HOMESTEAD

The old houses so far mentioned have been either torn down or so altered and remodeled that little of the original structure can be recognized. The spacious Carr Homestead, however, still stands as it was originally built.

Caleb Carr, governor of the colony in 1695, was one of the original purchasers of the island, and always took an active interest in its development. His share of the purchase was 120 acres located just north of the present Weeden's Lane and extended from the North road east to the shore. On this land he built his first house on Jamestown, which he gave to his son Nicholas. During his life time he made additional purchases of farm plots, also Gould and Rose Islands, which he also gave to his sons. One of these farm plots he bought of Henry Basset and John Green. On the original Fisher map these names are entered on what is now the Carr Homestead farm, and John Green's name also appears in the list of original purchasers. From the time of that purchase to the present day this farm has remained in the possession of descendants of Gov. Caleb Carr. It is now occupied by Major and Mrs. Bowser (Mollie Carr).

The actual date of the building of the Homestead is not known. Mr. Norman Isham, probably the greatest authority on old houses in his day, after an examination of the house when it was being resilled, stated that its date was definitely not later than 1721, and very probably in the late 1600's. In the Carr family at Jamestown it is believed to have been built by Caleb's son Nicholas.

The house was seemingly built around the enormous chimney which provides flues for six fire-places, three on the first floor and three in bedrooms on the floor above. The huge fire-place in the dining room, which in the olden days was the kitchen also, measures 6'2" wide, 4'10" high and 2'5" deep with a baking oven at the back of the fire-place. The house is full of antiques, many of them museum pieces. The grand-father's clock, built by Thomas Claggett of Newport, was placed in the south-east corner of the sitting-room soon after the house was built and has remained there, keeping perfect time, ever since. In a secret compartment of the old Goddard desk were always kept the original wills of Nicholas (1709) Thomas (1753) and Nicholas Carr (1813). These have now been treated for preservation and beautifully bound. By the fire-place are the old molds used for making candles, on the mantel are whale oil lamps which succeeded candles and in the brackets by the fire-place are kerosene lamps, all of which have been converted to the use of electric bulbs. So the whole history of inside illumination, from candles to electricity, is right before your eyes. In the attic, or "up garret" as the old folks would say, are spinning wheels, flax wheels and all the implements used for carding wool and making lindsey woolsey.

In the parlor is the cup-board where the choice china was always kept. This is now used as a museum where are arrow heads and other Indian implements found on the farm and many interesting articles of olden days



CARR HOMESTEAD IN WINTER

including old books, shoe buckles, jonny cake board and two revolutionary cannon balls, one of which was found in the attic and the other buried four feet deep in the earth by the cellar wall.

Although the old house lived through troublous times, an atmosphere of peace and serenity seems to envelop it and shed a soothing influence on those who stay there. In 1925 Harry Carr, Pulitzer award for journalism, 1st world war, noted author, columnist of the *Los Angeles Times* and a lineal descendant of Governor Caleb was visiting at the Homestead. Every day he wrote his "column" for the *Times*, and for one of these days he wrote the following:

Jamestown (R. I.) Sept 20. I think I am falling in love with the ghost of my great-grandmother.

I am writing this in the bedroom of the old colonial farmhouse where she came as a young bride—and in which she died.

Her miniature portrait hangs above the mantel.

That was before the days of daguerreotypes. The young ladies of her day sat in a chair that had a screen at one side and a candle on the other. An artist outlined the shadow of their faces on the screen—the silhouette portrait.

My great-grandmother's silhouette is lovely—a delicate patrician profile with little love curls caressing her forehead and the nape of her sweet, proud young neck.

Her name was Mary Cross. I imagine that her marriage must have been quite a society affair. Her husband was the great-grandson of Old Governor Caleb Carr, who was one of the last of the royal governors of Rhode Island. She was the daughter of a colonel of the colonial army.



CARR HOMESTEAD AND TRUMPET VINE

Photo, J. M. Watson

My great-grand-father must have been a beau; for in the bedroom hangs an old "courting mirror," such as the young dandies used to carry in wooden cases in their saddle-bags, whereby to arrange their wigs when they went a-wooing.

The old farmhouse was already one hundred and twenty years old when Mary came there in 1805 as a bride. She rode behind her husband on a pillion.

I don't know whether she had slaves to help her. In many of the old family wills slaves were given away.

But it was a Quaker family, and they early turned against slavery. So I imagine that my beautiful great-grandmother contrived with her sweet, lovely young hands alone.

Up in the old garret I found her old spinning wheel and her old linen wheel.

Yes, and the candle molds into which she poured the tallow for the winter lights.

Downstairs is an old clock, builded in 1640, which still ticks—just as it ticked to Mary Cross on the summer days when the sun danced on the water of Narragansett Bay.

Most of the time Mary must have been rocking a baby in the old box cradle that lies moldering in the dim, wan light of the garret.

Those were the days of huge New England families when every father was head of a clan.

In the seventeen years of her married life she had ten children. The last was born in October, 1822. It lived only a little while. The little wife died the following December, three days after the seventeenth anniversary of her wedding. She died on Christmas eve.

My great-grandfather loved her so dearly—and who would not—that he could not live without her. He died the following April. They say he just wasted away.

And this in "cold New England."

A little boy of 14 found himself head of a family of ten to feed. But he valiantly tackled the work on the old farm, while his little sister mothered the family.

They say that the spirit of Mary Cross comes back by night to this old bedroom—yearning over the little boy and his little sister, struggling to raise the family she left.

Every night I go to sleep in the old four-poster bed hoping her ghost will come. I hear the old trumpet vine rapping and tapping on the window.

But my beautiful great-grandmother does not come."

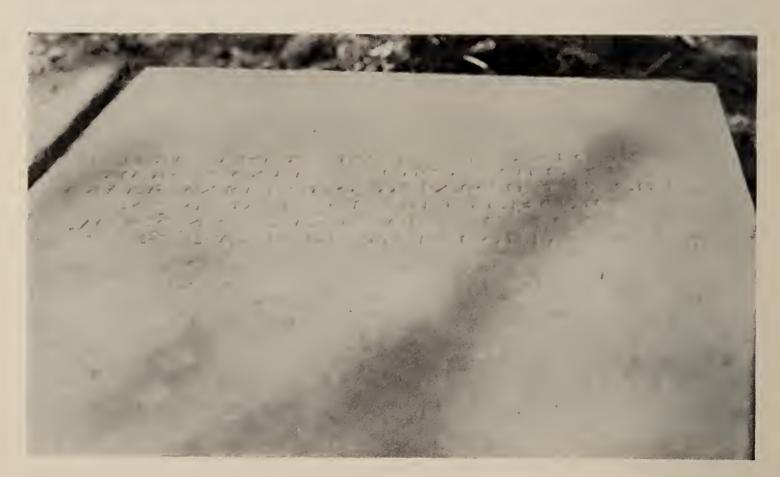
#### NICHOLAS CARR HOUSE

One Hundred and twenty acres on the north side of Weeden's Lane was chosen by Caleb Carr as his part of the original purchase of the island. While Caleb never lived on Conanicut he purchased several other farms which he gave to his sons as they married and set out for themselves. The house was in the lot just north of the lane. In Gov. Caleb Carr's will, dated 1693-4, he gave to his son Nicholas this farm "which I formerly leased unto him for about twenty years, as by said lease may appear, with dwelling house he now dwelleth in thereon and all other out houses." From this it can be deduced that the house must have been built sometime before 1673.



GRAVESTONE OF GOV. CALEB CARR

Photo, J. M. Watson



GRAVESTONE OF MERCY CARR

Photo, J. M. Watson

About fifty years ago John Foster Carr, his sister Louise, and their mother, descendants of Governor Caleb Carr, who then owned this farm, called the Wanton Farm, set apart a small plot in the northeast corner of the lot in which the original house stood as a private cemetery and the remains of Governor Caleb Carr and his wife Mercy were brought over from their neglected graves in Newport and are now lying side by side in this little cemetery on the farm that was Caleb Carr's share in the purchase of the island from the Indians in 1657.

The large flat stone marking Governor Caleb Carr's grave reads:—

Here lyeth interred ye body of Caleb Carr, Governor of this Colony, who departed this life ye 17th day of December in ye 73d year of his age, in the year of our Lord 1695

That of his wife Mercy reads:

Here lyeth interred ye body of Mercy Carr ye first wife of Caleb Carr, who departed this life ye 21 day of September in ye 45 year of her age in ye year of our Lord 1675

The grave stone of Mercy Carr bears the oldest date (1675) of any on the island that can be read. However, both she and her husband, Gov. Caleb Carr, were first buried in Newport and their remains were later brought over to Jamestown.

# CAPT. JOHN ELDRED'S HOUSE

On the east shore of the island just south of the end of North Ferry Road (Eldred Avenue) and close to the sailboat ferry stone wharf, now called Howland's wharf, stood the house of Capt. John Eldred. Although his name is not found in the list of original purchasers he must have settled on the island in the early 1700's. The house was torn down many years ago and not much is remembered of it except that, like the Thos. Paine house, it faced east towards the water. Its approximate location can be determined by the old trees that surrounded it.

While located close to the ferry landing no license was issued to Capt. John to keep a house of entertainment, as would naturally be expected, but such a license was granted to a Thomas Eldred in 1744 and it might have been for this house.

Near where the house stood are two large boulders and it was between these rocks that Capt. John placed his cannon referred to in the story related by Field in his "Revolutionary Defenses of Rhode Island".

#### Eldred's One Gun Battery

"During the Revolution there lived on the Eldred Farm, on the east side of Conanicut, Captain John Eldred, a patriot of the purest type. On his land there were two great rocks overlooking the water from a commanding position. Here Captain Eldred planted one of the guns taken from the fort on the island (the battery where Fort Dumpling later stood). From time to time, the patriotic old farmer would amuse himself by firing a shot at the British vessels as they passed up and down the East Passage. One day, he was fortunate enough to put a shot through the mainsail of one of the enemy's ships. This little pleasantry on the part of Farmer Eldred was not relished by the Britisher. A boat was lowered and a force sent ashore to dislodge the company, which, it was supposed, occupied the station, and spike the gun. Upon seeing the boat lowered, Capt. Eldred quickly hid himself in the swamp at the far end of his farm, and when the boat's party arrived on the spot, nothing was found but the gun mounted between the rocks. This they spiked, and the company they expected to capture had vanished as completely as though swallowed up by the earth. This was Eldred's one gun battery."

(The Jamestown Chapter of the D. A. R. is named the "John Eldred Chapter," and several years ago placed an appropriate tablet on one of the rocks.)

#### THE BATTEY HOUSE

On the west side of the North Road and a short distance south of Carr's Lane stands the Battey house. Samson Battey was active in the town's affairs and a great many of the early records are headed "Met at the house of Samson Battey." The location of Samson's house is unknown and there is no other information regarding it. Samson had six children; four sons left the island, a daughter Dinah, who married Fones Greene, was drowned three days after her marriage by the upsetting of a boat coming from Newport, leaving William "a ferryman of Jamestown" the only one of the family remaining on the island. This William had a son William, born some time after 1720. The date given for the building of the house is sometime between 1750 and 1759. So it can be assumed that it was this second William who built the house now standing and who lived in it during the Revolutionary War. In the September gale of 1869 the whole east end of the house was blown out. It was repaired and remodeled and is now occupied by Mrs. Arthur Hull.

The Revolutionary Battey was a Tory in sympathy, but not actively. While the Greenes, Weedens, Carrs and many others refused to sell the products of their farms to the British, Battey supplied them with vegetables and thereby was able to show his neighbors a half-bushel basket filled with silver coins. It was this William who, according to the story, was one of those who interceded on behalf of Nicholas Carr when he was held prisoner on a British man-of-war and helped obtain his release.

# JOHN A. CARR FARM

For a man who never lived on Jamestown Caleb Carr certainly took a great interest in the island and its development. As already noted, besides the land which was his share in the original purchase of the island, he acquired



THE BATTEY HOUSE

the property now known as the Carr Homestead farm, the Sam Carr farm, Gould Island and Rose Island. He also acquired the property now known as the John A. Carr farm, which, with the Carr Homestead bears the unique distinction of having been handed down from father to son from Caleb to the present generation.

The farm is located on the south side of North Ferry Road (Eldred Avenue) and west of the North Road. What is considered as the original house was located on the south side of Eldred Avenue just west of the North Road. It was standing some fifty years ago but had not been oeeupied for many years and was in such bad eondition that George C. Carr had it torn down. The structure of the house was similar to that of the Homestead House on Carr's Lane.

From wills in the Carr family the farm extended from the North Road to the west shore. On the Fisher map this land was allotted to 13 different persons, so it is evident that Caleb aequired all these various parcels by private purehase. Two of these parcels were owned by men named Fisher and in the wills part of the farm is referred to as "Fisher's Field." Thomas Carr, grandson of Caleb, divided the farm between his sons Nicholas and Benjamin. The eastern half was given to Nicholas and this is the farm that has always remained in the family. Also in this branch of the family is the old family Bible, printed in England in 1575. It is now the treasured possession of Mrs. John A. Carr and her daughter Catherine. In turning the pages it is easy to tell, by the condition of the leaves, the parts that had been most frequently read. The Book of Psalms seemed to have been the favorite.

The western part of the farm evidently passed out of the family. On the south side of Eldred Avenue not far from the Jamestown Bridge stands an old house now owned and occupied by Mrs. Abby Tefft and her daughter Helen. It is believed to have been built by Thomas Hazard sometime before 1799. In 1783 Jeremiah Hazard deeded 100 acres of the Benjamin Carr farm to Thomas Hazard. It is interesting to note that the foundation for the large central chimney was located right next to a bubbling spring. This had been walled about 2 feet down and, in the olden days, cans of milk and crocks of butter were put in it during hot weather to keep them cool. The house has a fine old kitchen fireplace with baking oven in the back wall.



CARR FAMILY BIBLE, PRINTED IN ENGLAND IN 1575

Courtesy Arthur Carr

#### THE WEEDEN HOUSE

On the south side of Weeden's Lane stood the Weeden Homestead, one of the largest of the old houses. It was built by John Weeden, probably some time between 1680 and 1690, and was always occupied by the Weeden family. It had the same arrangement as most of the old houses—a large room east and west of the front door, with a kitchen in the rear. It was standing 25 years ago completely furnished with priceless antiques which had been handed down from generation to generation. Particularly remembered is the "great room" with its corner cupboard, peculiar to pre-revolutionary houses, and

the fireplace bordered by interesting blue tiles, each of which depicted a different bible scene. The farm was finally sold out of the family and the house was torn down. Its location can be determined by the old trees, still standing, which surrounded it.

### OLIVER HOPKINS HOUSE

Just north of the Thomas Paine house, now called "Cajacet", and east of the Shore Road stands the Oliver Hopkins house, now called "Seaside Cottage". It is part of the summer camp for girls conducted by the Providence Y.W.C.A. While it undoubtedly is one of the older houses there seems to be no definite information as to the builder or the date of building. It has always been called the Oliver Hopkins house and is located on the plot chosen by Mr. Proctor, Robert Hazard and Thomas Gould as their share of the original purchase of the island.

Oliver Hopkins, his three wives and 14 children are buried in the southeast corner of Cedar Cemetery, Jamestown. The first inscription on the central stone, or monument, reads "Oliver Hopkins / son of / Jonathan and Mary Hopkins / born East Greenwich / August 12 1764 / died February 18 1851". His name does not appear in the list of original purchasers nor on the Fisher map and from the inscription on the monument it can be assumed that he came to Jamestown and built his house some time after the Revolutionary war.

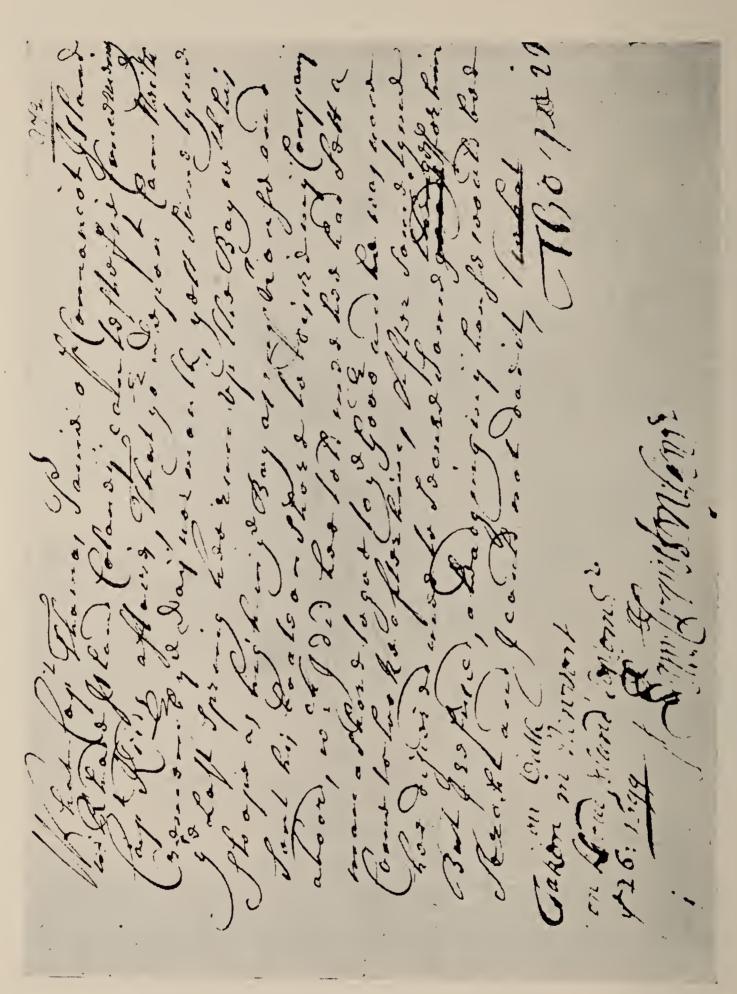
#### THOMAS PAINE HOUSE

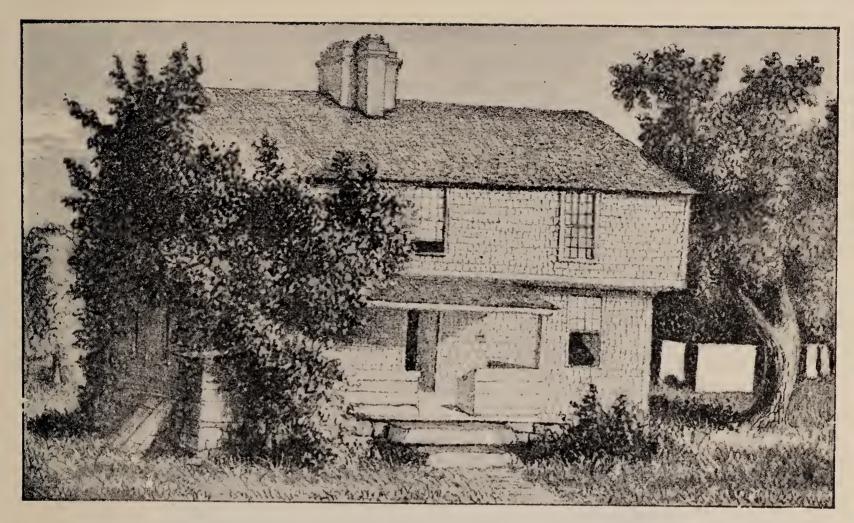
Just as you enter Conanicut Park, between the East Shore Road and the shore, is the Thomas Paine house, built, it has always been understood, in 1680, probably sometime before his marriage to Mary, daughter of Governor Caleb Carr. As far as is known it is the only house on the island built with the second story projecting over and beyond the first. About 65 years ago a third story was added to the house and in this remodeling the original structure of the second floor was lost. The ground floor, however, is believed to be as originally built, with the immense chimney and its old fireplaces, the huge beams in the ceilings, and a quaint china closet with glass doors built in the corner of the front room. All the old houses were built facing the south, but this and the Eldred house, probably because their owners were sea-faring men, faced the east towards the water.

Much more can be told about Captain Thomas Paine, the man, than about the house he built. It should be remembered that at this time England was constantly at war with some one of the European nations and, therefore, an enemy of England was an enemy of the colonies. Capt. Paine was a seafaring man, and did valiant service to the mother country under the following commission:

#### Commission to Capt. Thomas Paine

Sir Thomas Lynch, knight, one of the gentlemen of his Majesty's bed chamber, and Captain General and Governor in Chief of his Majesty's Island of Jamaica





Drawing by Edwin Whitfield, 1882 THOMAS PAINE HOUSE Courtesy of R. I. Historical Society

and territories thereon depending; and Vice Admiral to his Royal Highness, James, Duke of York, in the American seas.

Whereas, I am informed there are several pirates that have most barbarously murthered divers of his Majesty's subjects, robbed others and taken several vessels, cursing the King, and not so much as pretending to belong to any Prince, or to have any commission of war—These are therefore to authorize Capt. Thomas Paine, commander of the Frigate Pearl, to seize the said pirate, and to take, kill and destroy the said pirates and their ships, provided they resist and cannot be brought in, for doing which this shall be your warrant. I, likewise, hereby assure you and your men, that for such service you shall have all the favour they can expect, or I render you and them. Given under my hand, the 13th October, 1682. Jamaica.

Signed Thomas Lynch

By His Excellency Commanding.

However, the line between privateering and piracy was difficult to define. It would be many months before the news of the ending of a war could reach those at sea and so an act of privateering, perfectly legal while the war was on, became an act of piracy after the war was over. And so Capt. Paine became known as a pirate. In Lord Bellemont's journal is this entry: "Tuesday, Sept. 26, 1699. I also examined Capt'n Thomas Paine (formerly a pirate) upon his oath, relating to goods or treasure, imported by Capt'n William Kidd, and reported to be left by Kidd with said Paine." On the other hand we find that Dr. MacSparran held religious services in the house of Capt. Paine and in 1692 he was made a captain of the colonial forces with Nicholas Carr, his brother-in-law, as lieutenant.

Mr. John E. Hammond, Town Clerk of Jamestown, a direct descendant of Capt. Paine, has in his possession the original Paine Bible. It was printed in London in 1728 and on the inside front cover is written "John Paine Bibel Bought in year 1743 by Capt. Nicholas Whight in Holand." Then follows the names of those in the Hammond family who have possessed it.



THOMAS PAINE GRAVESTONE
Photo, Charles Rufus Harte

Capt. Kidd was a close friend of Capt. Paine and visited him at Jamestown. When Capt. Kidd was imprisoned in Boston, his wife Sarah wrote Capt. Paine requesting him to give the bearer of the letter 24 ounces of the gold he had belonging to Capt. Kidd. This close association of Capt. Kidd and Capt. Paine gave rise to stories of a hidden treasure and a haunted house. While many have dug for gold and others watched for ghosts, none have been rewarded.

The property recently changed hands and it is understood that the new owners intend to restore the house, as far as possible, to its original form.

# JOB WATSON HOUSE

At Conanicut Park about one-half mile south-east of the lighthouse are the cellar and foundation walls of an old Watson Homestead. If you can get through the underbrush you will see that it must have been quite a spacious house by the size of the cellar. It was surrounded by fine old trees and at the back of the house is what remains of a large apple orchard. It was the home of "Old King Wat" when he owned the Point Farm. It was burned to the ground many years ago. The date of building is unknown but "King Wat" and his brother were of the early settlers though not of the original purchasers.

### JOSEPH MOWRY

The name of Joseph Mowry appears often in both the town records and those of the Society of Friends (Quakers). He was born in 1647, the 9th child of Roger and Hannah Mowry. Tradition has it that Roger Mowry and Roger Williams were kinsmen. His farmhouse was where Union Street now is and when workmen were digging the cellar for the Gardner Inn they found a silver spoon marked J. M. M. (Joseph and Mary Mowry). The house disappeared many years ago, before the recollection of any now living.

He was made a freeman in 1686 and chosen councilman the same day. He served 9 terms as deputy from Jamestown. In 1677 he and 47 others received a grant of 5000 acres to be called East Greenwich.

He leased from William Brenton the 549 acres which was Brenton's share of the original purchase of the island, consisting of all the land south of the present Narragansett Avenue and east of Southwest Avenue and Mackerel Cove, including what is now called the "Dumplings". Later he purchased all this land from Brenton.

Both he and his wife were prominent in the Friend's Meeting and meetings were often held at his house. The Friend's records state that his wife was a "valuable minister, celebrated doctress and in great repute in their Society." There used to be many buckthorn trees on the island due to the fact that Mary Mowry planted them wherever she went.

Joseph Mowry died in 1716 and his wife in 1720. To grandaughter, Mary Clarke, Joseph left part of Rock Hill Farm, where he lived, with all buildings and wharves.

\* \* \*

As this little history comes to a close let us all gather together once again on that highest spot of the island. As we gaze on the peaceful scene of beauty before us the dim past seems to come to life and a panorama arises before our mental vision. Across the bay we see the Indian Chiefs assemble at Cocumscussoe to negotiate for the sale of the island and then in Coddington's house in Newport the same assemblage again gathers to sign the deed and the Indians give up possession in their own colorful ceremony of passing turf and twig to the white men. Then comes Joshua Fisher to survey the island and draw the map. One by one the settlers come and build their homes. After the town has been incorporated we see the proud proprietors assemble to adopt their form of government and elect their first officers. We now see great activity in the harbor — sailboat ferries going back and forth — ships from foreign ports loading and unloading their cargoes. But

a cloud appears on the horizon — Capt. Wallace, with his revenue ships, enters the bay and starts on his acts of violence which culminate in the burning of the village to the south and we see the flames darting high in the sky. We feel in our very souls the fear and despair that settle over the inhabitants as the fleet of Sir Peter Parker, 7 battle-ships and 70 transports, sails up the West Passage and around the island to the harbor and the British take possession of Newport and Jamestown. Now comes the French fleet of 16 war vessels into the bay and we see the British burning their ships rather than have them captured. Now Lord Howe's fleet appears off Point Judith. The French fleet, with cannons roaring, sails to the encounter and both fleets disappear over the horizon. But now we hear the roar and see the flashes of cannon across the bay to the east. The Battle of Rhode Island had started and all through the night we see the glow of the camp fires of the opposing armies. We feel the despair as the Colonial army is driven off in defeat and the utter hopelessness as Sir Henry Clinton, with a fleet of 72 vessels, sails into the bay. But now in a brightening sky, we see the British army embark on their vessels and sail off to the south. Again comes the friendly French fleet and peace settles over the land. We join the people as they hasten to the burned and desolate village to cheer General Washington as he crosses the island on his way to Newport. Next comes the news that the war is over and that the colonies are free and independent. We feel with them the exhilaration of victory and see the grim determination in their faces as they return to the cultivation of their farms and once again start building for the future.

As this tragic panorama gently fades away, we are still gazing on the unbelieveably blue waters of the bay framed by the verdant green of the pastures of Middletown, Portsmouth, Prudence and Narragansett. The island is bathed in sunshine, a soft, refreshing breeze blows gently off the ocean. We look around the island and realize that Jamestown has a remarkable history.



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